

THE
SECRET HISTORY
OF THE
GREEN ROOM:
CONTAINING
AUTHENTIC AND ENTERTAINING MEMOIRS
OF THE
ACTORS AND ACTRESSES
IN THE
Three Theatres Royal.

THE THIRD EDITION.

Vos O quibus ars est
Consona grandiloquo dum pulpita rumpis hiatu
Et vitia et mores alienae stringere vitae
Histrica gens! En vestra patent!--Ridete vicissim.

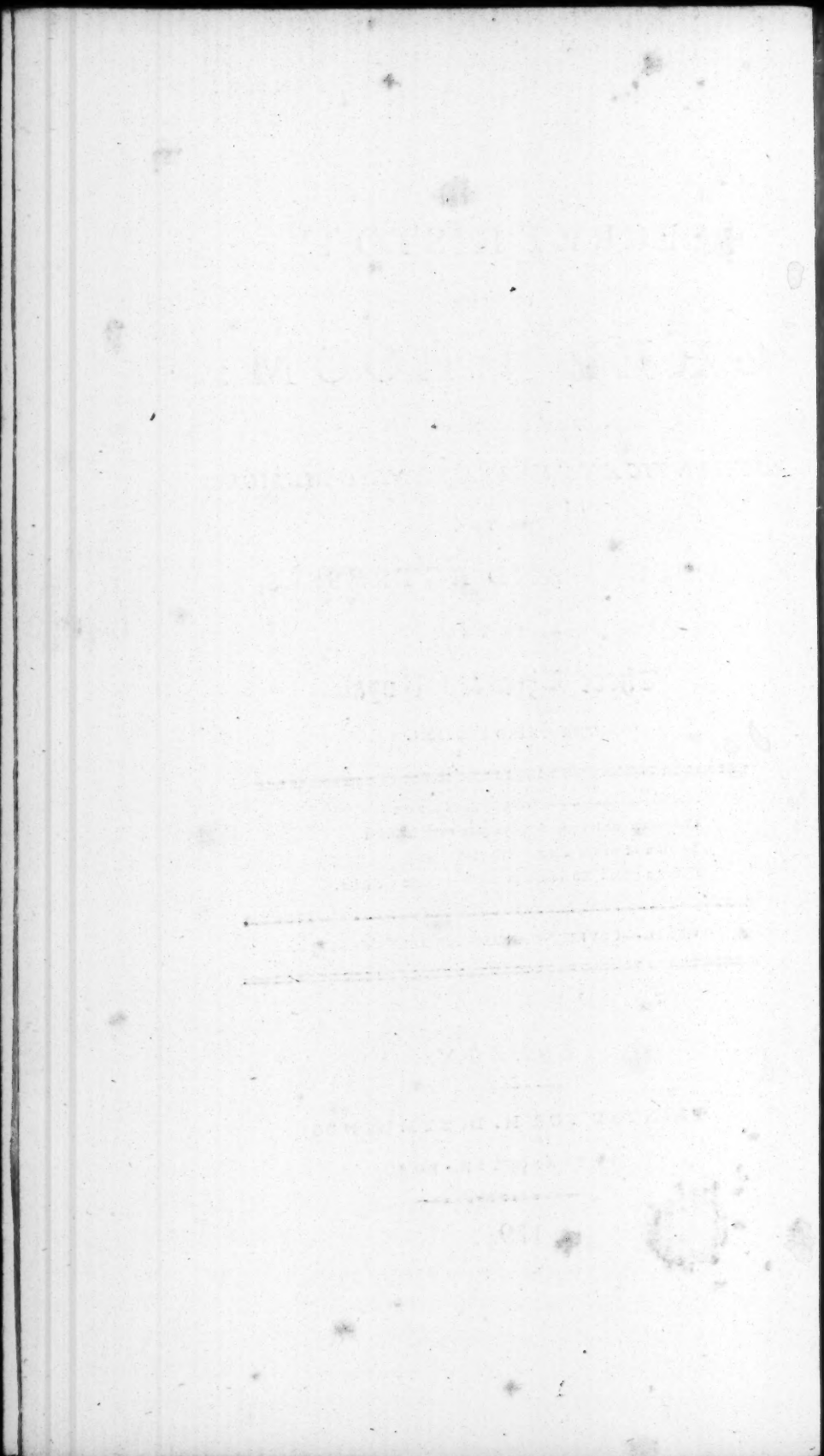
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SECRET HISTORY

OF THE

GREEN ROOM.

Mrs. ESTEN.

THE science of Dramatic Acting requires more bodily and less mental perfection in its votaries than any other: an elegant person, a beautiful face, a powerful melodious voice, a tolerable ear, and a good share of confidence, are gifts of such importance upon the Stage, that their possessor must be, *mentally*, below mediocrity, if he or she does not arrive at considerable eminence; on the contrary, we

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find

find those qualities of little or no use to the Philosopher, the Painter, or the Poet :—it is mind alone that can distinguish them for superiority above their competitors. An Actor with a quick ear and a good memory may be taught to prate and to move like a parrot or a puppet, and may display such beauties of eloquence and graces of deportment as charm an English audience; yet not one of those beauties or graces may be the result of his own studies. This axiom, we believe, is strongly illustrated in Mrs. ESTEN, who, were it not for the instructions of her Mother, might probably have been unheard off in the Theatrical Annals of this Metropolis.

This Lady is a natural daughter of the late Admiral PYE, by Mrs. BENNET, Authoress of "*Anna*," "*Juvenile Indiscretions*," and other esteemed Novels; indeed, she has acquired considerable and merited reputation in that line of writing. Miss BENNET having a Brother in the Navy, through introduction became acquainted with

with several Gentlemen in the same profession, and she captivated the heart of Mr. ESTEN, Purser of a Man of War; but acting under the government, and directed by the experience, of her Mother, who regretted her *Juvenile Indiscretions*, she did not suffer passion to get the better of prudence. Mr. ESTEN married her; they lived together some years in a domestic and happy state, and two little-ones were the fruits of their mutual fondness; but Mr. ESTEN, desirous to procure the means of supporting so expensive an establishment as a numerous family, adventured in some undertakings which proved unsuccessful; his finances were ruined, and his wife was necessarily returned upon the hands of her Mother. What Mr. ESTEN's pursuits now are, we know not, nor have we heard that he has been with our Heroine since she made her *debut* on the London Stage.

From Mrs. BENNET's disposition towards literature and fiction, the Drama naturally came often under her consideration; and from her Mother,

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Mrs.

Mrs. ESTEN imbibed an attachment towards this favourite amusement, which her circumstances soon suggested to her the probability of turning to pecuniary advantage. The riches and reputation to be acquired on the Stage have dazzled and deluded the fancy of sounder heads than Mrs. ESTEN's, and therefore we need not be surprised if she determined on a pursuit which not only promised the possession of those, but also the greatest admiration of her beauty—a passion almost inseparable from the female sex.

Mr. DAWES, a gentleman of the Long Robe, was the first before whom she rehearsed in private with a view of becoming a public Performer. Prepossessed, perhaps by her personal charms, he pronounced highly in her favour. Others saw and approved her talents; and, as the last step towards her becoming an Actress, she was introduced to Mr. HARRIS; but his opinion of her abilities was not encouraging enough to bring her forward in London even upon trial. She was, however, recommended
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to Bath, where she was assured of an opportunity of becoming a Candidate for Dramatic fame.

Upon the speculation of her daughter's abilities Mrs. BENNET took a house in that fashionable city, and Mrs. ESTEN made her *entrée* upon the Stage as *Belvidera*, about five or six years ago. She dressed the character in a most picturesque and elegant manner, and, aided by her beauty, she made a very favourable impression upon the Bath audience: she continued to perform in that city and in Bristol for a season or two, where she had an abundance of managerial aid, (Mr. DIMOND preferring petite Actresses, as they agree best with his own figure;) but her benefit at Bristol happening to fall upon the night of the day on which there was a grand sailing match, the *aquatic* diversion so materially diminished the Theatrical in point of spectators, that, instead of clearing, she lost money by the night.

Whether Mrs. ESTEN's Benefit was fixed for this unfortunate night by

accident or design, we cannot say— but she attributed it to the latter ; and all the eloquence and virulence of her Mother's pen were immediately engaged to interest the People of Bristol in her favour against the Managers : but the effect failed ; and after such hostility it may naturally be concluded that Mrs. ESTEN was discharged.

Her abilities, although they then were by no means so deserving of admiration as they are now, were sufficiently eminent to procure her an engagement in Dublin, where her very *looks* must have made the Manager her friend. At this time her Mother taught her in every point the art of succeeding ; from the penciling of the eyebrows and eye-lashes, the beautifying her face, and the moving her arms, to the manner of speaking the most difficult passages in SHAKESPEARE. By practice and the instructions of Mrs. BENNET she greatly improved her talents, and was soon after engaged for Edinburgh, where she was received

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as one scarcely inferior to Mrs. SIDDONS or Mrs. JORDAN.

Her very great fame at Edinburgh soon reached London; and although Mr. HARRIS was not much inclined to alter his first opinion of her, yet he agreed she should have a trial: and Mrs. ESTEN, relying with the greatest confidence on her own abilities, thought there only wanted a trial to confirm her superiority. Accordingly she made her first appearance in London at Covent-Garden Theatre, October 1790, in the character of *Rosalind* in *As you Like it*; and her success was so extremely flattering, that it justified her most sanguine expectations. This prodigality of applause gave hopes that she would draw crowds during the season, but her attraction continued a few nights only. She attempted the favourite and various characters in which Mrs. SIDDONS, Mrs. JORDAN, and Miss FARREN, were most admired; and although she fell short of all those great Actresses, yet her performances were much above mediocrity. Like Mr. JOHN PALMER,
she

she was allowed to be agreeable in almost every part, but to possess excellence in very few. She performed during the whole season without receiving any salary, but with the indulgence of appearing in whatever characters she chose; and towards the conclusion, in addition to a tolerable share of public esteem, she received a handsome sum by a *free Benefit*.

But with all this success her talents were not thought sufficient to procure her a handsome engagement in Covent-Garden Theatre, and she at this time would probably have been in Dublin or Edinburgh, had it not been for the friendship of Mrs. JORDAN. Every exertion was made by Mrs. ESTEN's friends to influence the Managers in her favour; and although she has some noble patrons, yet the object was not accomplished until Mr. COURTTS the Banker requested the Duke of C—R—CE to write to Mr. HARRIS in her favour. His Highness consulted Mrs. JORDAN, whose natural disposition prompted her to serve our Heroine, and

and the Royal Letter was not a simple recommendation ;—it had the desired effect, and Mrs. ESTEN was engaged at eleven pounds per week.

This Lady is so great a favourite, and has so many friends in Edinburgh, that the Theatre in that city being to be disposed of, a warm contest has arisen between the great personages who rule the Drama there, whether Mrs. ESTEN shall be the Manageress or Mr. STEPHEN KEMBLE the Manager. The latter is said to be backed by the Lord Provost, the Lord Advocate, and the Dean of Faculty ; the leases of the Glasgow and Edinburgh Houses have been let to him by the creditors of JACKSON the late Manager ; he stands with the Theatres in his hand, and the Magistrates on his side—but he has no authority for performing plays. The Duke of HAMILTON, who is Mrs. ESTEN's *particular patron*, has, by some *Hocus Pocus*, of which we have no idea, procured himself, and that *honest* Minister Mr. HARRY DUNDAS, to be appointed Patentees. With what *decorum* a Duke, who holds
a long

a long list of places under Government, and a Secretary of State, should become the Managers of a Company of Strolling Players, we will leave every one to decide: and with what *justice* the right of representing Dramatic pieces should be torn from the creditors and proprietors of a Theatre, in which they have embarked their money, under the assurance of the possession of that right, must be equally obvious. But so it is that the creditors and proprietors have let the house to Mr. KEMBLE, who was the best bidder; and now the Duke of HAMILTON, seconded by Mr. DUNDAS, steps in with his "*piece of parchement, and a bit of wax dangling at the end of it,*" to prevent a body of men from reaping any advantage from their own property. His Grace no doubt is *well acquainted* with Mrs. ESTEN's *merits*; and, although Mr. Secretary DUNDAS was at first inclined to favour the creditors, yet, whether he thought in so doing, he would be acting inconsistently with his character, or that he was won by

by so beautiful a suitor as our Heroine, he has now declared in her favour; and the dispute at present rests, "*KEMBLE and the Theatre* versus Mrs. *ESTEN and the Patent* ; but how it will terminate, time must decide. We must, however, remark upon the absurdity of appointing, as the Manageress of the Edinburgh Theatre, a Lady, who, while she should be at her post in Scotland, is to be performing in London!!!

Though rather small, yet Mrs. ESTEN's person is extremely neat; and in men's cloaths she is very well, although she would be much better if at the knees her limbs were more straight. Her face is beautiful, and she is perfect mistress of the use of a fine pair of eyes, which those who pretend to be in the secrets of the toilet say, she greatly heightens by the exercise of art upon her eye-brows and eye-lashes, and the languishing rollings of which every one who has been near her must acknowledge the charm. Her voice, like Mrs. SIDDONS's, is well calculated for Tragedy, but is not
suf-

sufficiently feminine for the gay scenes of the Comic Muse: her action and deportment are graceful and easy, and her articulation and comprehension of the sense of the author deserve great commendation. But for most of those qualifications she is principally indebted to the judgment and drillings of her Mother, who is a woman of more than common shrewdness and ability. Those who saw Mrs. ESTEN's *debut* at Bath, are astonished at her present excellence; and those who know both her and Mrs. BENNET ascribe it wholly to the instructions of the latter.

It is not our design to blame Performers for using every fair means of enhancing their value; but when they attempt to pull down others for the purpose of raising themselves, they certainly deserve reproach. The fulsome panegyrics on Mrs. ESTEN published daily in the public prints might here have passed unnoticed, were it not, that, in order to give lustre to herself, she is reported to have encouraged the sullying of Mrs. JORDAN. If this be true,

true, we can only account for it in the piece of service conferred on Mrs. ESTEN, by Mrs. JORDAN's interference with a Royal D—ke in her favour: for nothing is more just than the old maxim, that we too often hate those to whom we are obliged.

And since the subject of Newspaper panegyric, vulgarly called *puffing*, is started, we will here relate an occurrence in general circulation, which may, for aught we know, be more entertaining than true.—Some time ago Mrs. BENNET drew up a very elaborate eulogium upon her daughter's performance of a new part, and sent it to a confidential Print long before the curtain had risen, with the promise of three guineas for its insertion; and it appeared accordingly next day. But a Critic who had gone to see the Play in the way of business, added to it great praises on Mr. LEWIS and Mr. QUICK; this displeased our Heroine and her Mother so much, that they refused to pay more than *one* guinea, and referred

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to Messrs. LEWIS and QUICK for the other two.

To those who enquire minutely into things, it has occasioned some surprise, that upon an income from the Stage, not exceeding six or seven hundred pounds per annum, Mrs. ESTEN should be enabled to keep her carriage, footman, &c. and live in a very splendid style. But it is improper that such curious people should know every thing—although, indeed, Mrs. ESTEN does not, and, for any thing we know, has no reason to make a secret of any of her actions. Her mother is a clever experienced woman, and the Public may rest assured, that like most of her Theatrical sisterhood, Mrs. ESTEN is not without a *friend*.

Mr.

Mr. JOHNSTONE.

THE accomplishments of a Classical education are of less importance to Stage Candidates than to the Candidates in any other profession. A strong memory is of more utility to a Player than Greek, Latin, or Metaphysics:—hence our present Hero shines one of the first Singers in Covent-Garden Theatre, and no inconsiderable Actor, although report has not yet ascribed to him a translation of the Iliad, or a familiar acquaintance with *Locke*, *Newton*, or *Descartes*.

Dublin claims the honour of his birth. His mother being a dealer in wearing apparel was well known to Theatrical Gentlemen, who are generally very fond of second-hand finery; and thus did little JACK commence a personal knowledge of the Sons of the Sock and Buskin. Pleased with their seeming grandeur, his mind became

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attached

Mr.

attached to so splendid a profession, and he enlisted under the banners of an itinerant Company in the country of Ireland.

The Stage is looked on with great contempt in the provincial parts of the sister kingdom; and as JOHNSTONE was a fine handsome fellow, he was frequently solicited by a Recruiting Serjeant, while in Athlone, to enter into his Majesty's service; but that honour our hero declined, until he was one day pursued for debt by a Bailiff, when he flew to his friend of the halbert, and accepted the bounty, thinking it better to carry a musket than to be carried to gaol.

He was several years in the Army, and divided his time in devotions to Mars and Venus: but too much freedom with the latter brought on an ill state of health, which, however, he resolved to turn to advantage. He had long been sick of the trade of war, and now prevailed on the Surgeon, who was his friend, to represent him as totally

tally incapable of duty, in consequence of which he was discharged.

He immediately set off for Dublin, and obtained an engagement in the Theatre, though at a small salary. Miss POITIER, a daughter of Mrs. THOMPSON, who made a conspicuous figure at Covent-Garden about twenty years ago, was then the favourite warbler in that city; and as she united with an excellent voice a pretty person and unblemished character, our Hero paid his addresses to her with great fervency, and not being easily discomfited, he prevailed on her to marry him.

From this period he gradually rose in public estimation as a Singer, until he and his wife took the lead in that department. He was always fond of play, and at one time had a dispute with the Marker at a Billiard table, about ten shillings and a penny, which the latter said he owed for games; but JOHNSTONE, not recollecting the circumstance, refused to pay it, though very often solicited: While perform-

ing in *Cymon*, where the verses of one of his songs concluded with *Sing bey derry derry! Sing bey derry derry!* to his great astonishment he was always echoed by the Marker from the Gallery with, *Pay me, Jack Johnstone, my ten and a penny—my ten and a penny!*—This whimsical way of demanding payment proved very entertaining to the audience, and most effectually forced our hero to comply.

In 1783 he was engaged with his wife for Covent-Garden by Mr. HARRIS, and made his *debut* as *Lionel*, with considerable *eclat*. Mrs. JOHNSTONE was likewise very favourably received; but that Lady's emulation was soon subverted by the conduct of her husband, who became strongly attached to Mrs. WILSON, whose charms as an Actress were as much admired as her character as a woman was detested. She used every art to seduce the affections of our Hero; and as the liberality of Lord HINCHINBROKE enabled her to bestow valuable presents, she soon accomplished her design; and delighted

ed in mortifying Mrs. JOHNSTONE, who took lodgings at Turnham-Green, purposely to absent herself from the painful scene. She died there a few months afterwards of a broken heart ; yet, during the whole of her illness, she was never heard to blame either her husband or his paramour.

The finances of Mrs. WILSON were daily exhausting, and at last they became so low, that whether from lack of love or lack of money, our hero deserted her: she died soon after at Shrewsbury, on her way to Ireland, unknown and friendless, and it was said in great misery of mind—a just punishment for her infamy, particularly towards Mrs. JOHNSTONE.

Left now without any female connexion, Mr. JOHNSTONE became a very general lover. He at last found a Lady who had been settled in a handsome annuity by a *Friend*, and with her, we believe, he lived for several years.—His general attention to pecuniary matters has enabled him, as it is said, to oblige his acquaintance with sums
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of money on equitable principles, and to have placed him above the reach of poverty.

This gentleman of late behaved in so honourable a manner as leads us to doubt the truth of the representations of former parts of his life. One of the beautiful and gay Miss BOLTONS, whose father is a Wine Merchant in Bond-Street, became so strongly attached to him, that much uneasiness was produced in her family by it ; and, obeying the impulse of passion rather than the dictates of prudence, she eloped, accompanied by one of her sisters, and they both resided for a considerable time with Mr. JOHNSTONE in his own lodgings. This rash step was blazoned forth in all the Newspapers, and Miss BOLTON's character received a stab which only one measure could cure. That measure was very generously adopted by Mr. JOHNSTONE. The Lady was entirely in his power, and none would have thought it extraordinary had he deserted her ; but with a liberality of which he was not suspected, he
resolved

resolved that she who had risked all for him, should not suffer by her confidence. By the mediation of friends the father was reconciled to his daughter, and Mr. JOHNSTONE married her last winter—a few weeks after her elopement.

He has performed at the Haymarket Summer Theatre, during the two last seasons, and enjoys very high favour with the Public, yet gives himself very little trouble to deserve it. Both his natural and feigned voices are excellent; but so totally different, and separated by such a chasm, that when he passes from the one to the other, it is as if an Organist leapt at once from the *open diapason* to the small flute stop. This defect is highly reprehensible, because it is evidently curable. Were he to employ some time every day in *sol-faing*, the gulph would soon be filled up, and a smooth, connected and uncommonly extensive voice obtained.

Such practice too would improve him in other respects. His volubility and expression would receive that improve-

provement which they want. He would be induced to pay more attention to *time*. He would learn in *ad libitum* passages to introduce something like a cadence, instead of a protracted scream. He would soon be a powerful English Singer, and enjoy that applause from taste and judgment which he now receives chiefly from prejudice and ignorance.

He is, we believe, a very good companion ; and is frequently invited to the PRINCE of WALES's Parties ; but that honour we must attribute wholly to the melody of his voice.

In his person he is manly and handsome, if we except his legs, which are uncommonly thick, and oblige him as often as possible to wear boots. He possesses tolerable merit as an Actor ; his deportment is easy and genteel, and his readings are the result of a good natural understanding. In the character of an *Irish Gentleman*, such as *Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan*, or *Major O'Flaberty*, he is extremely happy, and may be justly said to excel the celebrated MOONY.

Mr.

Mr. MARSHALL.

IT frequently occurs that a Player, by personating one character with more than common ability, obtains a general fame much above what his general talents deserve; but particularly if he happens to introduce himself in so favourable a situation, the public make generous allowances for what he may afterwards fail in, and will not be disgusted with him in any part, because in one he has given them extraordinary satisfaction. Mr. MARSHALL was very fortunate in his *debut*. He made a character highly entertaining which before had been regarded with a slight approbation; and instead of being looked on with indifference in other parts which he supports indifferently, the audience give him a certain degree of credit for all he does, because he is the *celebrated Bagatelle*.

Mr. MARSHALL is a native of London. His father was a reputable Master

Mr.

ter Taylor in Crown-Court, Russel-street, and he was bred to the same business. In such a situation, placed immediately between the two Winter Theatres, employed by the Performers, and almost every house in the neighbourhood occupied by them, we cannot be surprised if Mr. MARSHALL, while a youth, felt a propensity for a profession so amply calculated to captivate those who are not arrived at a time of life when reason and prudence can triumph over vanity and ambition. He daily beheld the Players rioting in dissipation, yet courted and applauded by the Town ; and anxious to adopt a line of life which seemed to abound with pleasure and praise, and for which by a tolerable voice and taste for Music, he believed himself qualified, we need not wonder at finding him treading the boards at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket, where he met with so much applause in a piece called the *Silver Tankard*, that although his wishes might not be gratified by finding himself a public idol, yet his hopes were so far

far fulfilled that he resolved on prosecuting the Stage; and in order to obtain by art, what nature had not given, he joined some Provincial corps, where practice, he concluded, might supply the want of genius.

Whether from a sympathy arising from a similarity of inclination, or from any other cause, he about this time became acquainted with a young Lady of considerable musical powers. Their vocal warblings begot such a mutual flame, that they bound themselves by holy ties to perform the *duet* of life together. But Mrs. MARSHALL could not long confine herself to the *rules* prescribed for the matrimonial state; she resolved to practise in *ad libitum* as often as it pleased her; *discord* now succeeded *harmony*, and the *chords* of affection, prudence, and even decency, being broken, Mr. MARSHALL, whom we do not find was blameable, determined to be *solo*. Mr. and Mrs. MARSHALL separated, and the latter afterwards performed with reputation as a Singer in all the principal towns in the North

of this Island, indulging herself with every object who pleased her fancy, until a *finale* was put to her life by DEATH, that grim tyrant, who can only be arrested by the extraordinary power of the *Vegetable Syrup de Velnos*. She died about two years ago, near Newcastle upon Tyne.

After the matrimonial establishment was dissolved, Mr. MARSHALL continued on the Stage, but in different companies from those where his wife was engaged. In Manchester, Birmingham, York, &c. he performed with considerable *eclat*. His cast of parts lay chiefly in Opera and genteel Comedy ; he was looked upon as the first Vocal Performer, and was well received in what are called the fine Gentlemen : but the character which procured his engagement in London, was *Bagatelle*, in the *Poor Soldier*. From a slight knowledge of the French language, together with some observation on their manners, he was enabled to personate the *French Valet* with more than common success. But what added the most to his fame, was, his introducing a
Song,

Song, written for that part by Mr. CHARLES MURRAY, of the Bath Theatre. Although Mr. MURRAY had composed the Song for himself, and had obtained great applause in it, yet it proved more beneficial to Mr. MARSHALL, who, from his knowledge of Music, and practice as a Vocal Performer, was enabled to sing it better than the author.

Upon Mr. WEWITZER's being appointed Manager of the Royalty Theatre, the Managers of Covent-Garden House naturally cast their thoughts on Mr. MARSHALL, as the most capable of succeeding him in the French Characters. He was accordingly engaged, and made his first appearance as *Bagatelle*, towards the conclusion of the year 1790. His success in that part was very great; he was constantly encored in Mr. MURRAY's Song, and became an established favourite with the Town.

Mr. MARSHALL's reputation, and principal line of acting, however, are not of such importance as to prevail on the Managers to keep him in his own

proper walk : he is obliged occasionally to be a pack-horse, and to come forth as the "*Man of Wax*," in *Romeo and Juliet*, and other characters of equal consequence, which he sustains with credit to the Theatre ; nor are his Vocal Powers totally uncalled for.— Indeed he renders himself useful in many other characters, besides those in which he can acquire fame.

We have observed him to drop the character, for the sake of drawing applause to the ideas or language of the Author. This is a practice which, he should carefully avoid, however ardent his desire for a plaudit may be. While personating *Pierpoint*, in *He Wou'd be a Soldier*, he occasionally forgets that he should speak a dialect between broken English and French, and when he comes to a passage which is a *clap-trap*, he delivers it as roundly in his own native tongue, as if he were speaking for *Manly*, in *The Provok'd Husband*.

There is one part of this Gentleman's character which we consider it to be
peculi-

peculiarly our duty to add, and that is, that his character in private life is a good one. This is a recommendation, which, for the honour of the Stage, we shall always be ready to make known, and to Gentlemen in Mr. MARSHALL'S sphere, it is no inconsiderable one; for the Managers will certainly always attend to private character, where they can; however they may wink at the infamy of those whose great talents and favour with the public supersede all other enquiries.

Mrs. MATTOCKS.

SOME people are so much in the possession of obvious talents, that let them be placed in never so opposite a situation of life to the exertion of them, you can see the mistake of fortune, and at once pronounce what they are fit for. Had Mrs. MATTOCKS been educated for a Nun, it would require no great depth of penetration to know she was born an Actress.

This Lady, like Mrs. SIDDONS, is a child of the Stage ; her father and mother were both in the profession at the time of her birth ; the former was at one time Manager of Goodman's-Fields-Theatre ; and her brother is, at this time, Manager of a Company in America. Willing to give her the entire choice of her walk in life, her parents waved their assent, till she was of an age capable of deciding for herself, without the danger of being dazzled with those false theatrical appearances that
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are so much the *Will-a-wisps* of inexperienced youth. Her maturer age seconded her early inclinations, and her deserved success as a Comedian, has since proved they did not run counter to her genius.

Having an exceeding good natural voice, improved by a knowledge of music, her first onset was in singing characters, in which she acquired for some time the reputation of a good second Singer; but her forte was not as yet discovered. Study and observation on some good originals, tempted her to try the sprightly parts of low Comedy: in these she succeeded to her wishes. The delicacy of her person, the vivacity of her temper, with a distinguishing judgment, all shewed themselves to advantage in this walk, and she was in a short time considered by the Town as a very universal and useful Performer.

She had just gained this character with the Public, when Mr. MATTOCKS, of the same house, paid his addresses to her: he too was a vocal Performer of some consequence,

consequence, and ranked as no inconsiderable Actor. Sympathy of sentiment seemed to form this union; however it met with obstacles on the side of her parents, who might have considered the marriage of their daughter, in some respect, an alienation of their property. But the parties were determined to be happy in spite of the obstacles of either laws or parents; a trip to France baffled both, and on their return they were one flesh.

For some years the torch of Hymen burned unobscured, but such is the contagion of the Green Room, that to be strictly virtuous almost amounts to a particularity:—whether it was Mrs. MATTOCKS would not be particular, or whether it was her inclinations were seduced to make another preference, the Public will best decide from the following sketch of her amoroso:

As to his face, it would be a fortune to him in his profession, provided the principal Actor was always to be an assassin; his voice is the true accompaniment

ment of that face, dismal, hollow, and inarticulate ; hence his heroes are braves, his lovers, ghosts ; in short, the only thing tolerable about him is his person, and even that becomes intolerable the moment it is set in motion.

Such is the portrait of her favourite. The husband at first talked loudly of this affair ; said he had seen his disgrace—described situations—and absolutely, for some time, parted from her bed : but prudence soon resumed her throne ; a disunion of persons must form a disunion of salary, and his wife's was such as was not contemptible ; he was beginning to consider it in this light when the offending fair one, like the repenting EVE, stood before, him, bathed in penitence and tears.

————— “ soon his heart relented
“ Tow'rs her, his life so late, and sole delight,
“ Now at his feet submissive in distress.”

In short, the quarrel was amicably adjusted on her appealing to himself,
“ Whether he could suppose her capable

ble of relinquishing so agreeable a person as he was, for such an ugly dog as B——Y?"

Whether from a desire of retaliating, or that his affections were equally wavering as his wife's, Mr. MATTOCKS soon after had an amour with Mrs. B——Y, who had lately lost her dear POWELL. Mrs. MATTOCKS, who was on the most friendly terms with her rival, remonstrated calmly, and obtained her promise to desist; but a second discovery excited her greatest indignation, and she openly, and even triumphantly, exposed her dear spouse and the *chaste* wife of the Musician, in the Green Room.

About eight or ten years ago Mr. MATTOCKS became Manager at Liverpool, where his wife performed Tragedy, Comedy, and all the first characters in every line; but as the scheme turned out a very unprofitable one, he soon found his pecuniary affairs greatly embarrassed, if not totally ruined. His wife re-engaged herself at Covent-Garden, and he now principally lives
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with Major HALLIDAY, a Gentleman who is extremely fond of theatrical representations.

It is the peculiar distinction of this Actress, that she possesses so lively a sensibility about her, as to *realize* her parts; nor is she deficient in judgment, though she too often falls into the *outré*. The broad stare, her formal deportment, and coarse voice, incapacitate her from portraying the Lady; but in low Comedy, her high colouring is generally pleasing, particularly to the Galleries. She has long since declined all vocal characters.

Mr.

Mr. ROCK.

IN delineating this little disciple of Momus, we shall not occupy a greater space than his importance in the Dramatic corps demands; and we confess a consciousness of inability to make his memoirs half so entertaining in the perusal as his genuine humour occasionally is in the exhibition on the Stage. Imported from that histrionic nursery, Hibernia, he carries a strong evidence of his nativity on his tongue; and Limerick has to boast of giving birth to him, who represents with uncommon excellence, the manner of a majority of the inhabitants of that kingdom.

But it is not surprising, that he who was bred to the business of ornamenting heads, should so far have improved his own, as to be able to turn the peculiarities of his countrymen to advantage; and, although he at first discarded the comb and the puff to become an *Alexander the Great*, for which character his person is happily adapted

ed ; yet, after experiencing the hardships attendant on itinerant Companies, where all is gratification on the public Stage, and all is mortification at home at the table, he found it would be more conducive to the solid enjoyments of life to be a *Sub* in London than a Leader in the Country.

It would be uncandid to touch upon his merit as an Actor, in any other characters than those of Vulgar Irishmen, because he is forced into any other by sheer necessity. In Vulgar Irishmen, however, he is perfectly unrivalled, and that line of acting is not now inconsiderable. His performance in *Rosina* may rank, in point of excellence, with any other on the Stage. There is a hesitation and stupidity in his manner, and a vacant insensibility in his looks, which, aided by a rich brogue, render him excessively entertaining, and really admirable in those characters ; and, it may be justly added, that what Mrs. SIDDONS is in Tragedy, Mrs. JORDAN in Comedy, or Mrs. BILLINGTON in Opera, Mr. ROCK is in *Vulgar Irishmen*.

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Mrs.

Mrs. LEWIS.

LIKE in other pursuits of life, connexions formed on the Stage sometimes enable those to become independent, who, if they had been left to the reward of their own abilities, must have pined in want. The merchant and the tradesman frequently has riches heaped upon him, although his capacity is not worth a shilling, only because his uncle or his cousin happen to be wealthy and knowing; and we find Mrs. LEWIS, whose greatest Theatrical recommendations never could have entitled her to thirty shillings per week, seated in the midst of power and plenty, to which she has been raised by what is commonly called being *ruined*.

Had Mr. LEESON, the father of this lady, been a strict moralist, it is probable she would not now have graced these pages. But an inattention to his business of a Printer, which he followed

lowed in St. John's-Square, and an inattention to his family, favoured the early *penchant* of his daughter to the Drama: which with another father might have been curbed as tending to divert a young mind, from sobriety and industry to folly and idleness. Miss LEESON's passion to see plays, was followed by a passion to act them: and having acquired some knowledge of reciting, by her observation of the Performers, her friends conceived such favourable hopes of her success, that they procured her an introduction to Mr. MACKLIN, in order that she might be trained for public exhibition.

That old veteran, and celebrated Theatrical tutor, wanted no other recommendation to his favour than Miss LEESON's looks; she was very pretty, and Mr. MACKLIN always felt himself happy in instructing the fair sex. After she had been under his care a short time, he took her to Dublin, for the purpose of introducing her in that soil, where so many Stage plants of eminence have sprung up and flourish-

ed. But Miss LEESON's success was not such as to add honour to the place of her Theatrical birth, yet her youth and beauty secured her protection and encouragement with the auditors in that gallant nation.

She had not long been on the Irish boards, before she made an impression on Mr. WILLIAM LEWIS, at that time performing with great success in Cappel-Street. He attacked her heart with considerable ardour, and adorned with Theatrical laurels as he was, he soon made a conquest. But our young lovers were too warm and sincere, to wait the cold forms of matrimony, a stipulation for which, they thought, would imply a doubt of each other's constancy and truth. They lived together many years, and when they had produced several fine children, and had fully proved and approved each other's temper, they married.

It would be ungenerous to analyse Mrs. LEWIS's Dramatic abilities; they cannot be commended, although her motives for continuing on the Stage must

must. Her family is large, and no doubt she wishes to contribute all in her power towards their happiness; nor does she thrust herself forward in characters which she is incapable of sustaining. From an apparent knowledge of the extent of her powers, she never assumes parts of more importance than such as *Lady Percy* in *Henry IV*, where it is impossible any genteel well-dressed woman can offend. The rarity of her appearance on the Boards leads us to conclude that she would never come before the Public, were it not for a desire of occasionally drawing upon the Treasurer; and although we cannot applaud the Actress, yet we must admire the woman.

MR. HARLEY.

HOWEVER the heroes and heroines of the Drama may condemn the opprobrium so generally affixed by the world to the profession of a Player, they are themselves principally the cause of its attaching so much disrespect in Society. Suddenly elevated from obscurity and indigence to affluence and fame, very few of them have sufficient prudence and good sense to make the esteem of their moral keep pace with that of their professional character; and the only use they in general make of Fortune's bounties is an unbounded indulgence in the extremes of dissipation and fashionable follies.

The present subject of these memoirs, by changing his name from DAVIES to HARLEY, on his assuming the *Buskin*, seems to have been aware of this; but, although he was apprehensive of stigmatizing himself in the country, his

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success in London would certainly justify him in throwing off the mask.

The first employment of this gentleman was that of a Banker's Clerk, at No. 28, Cornhill, where he served four years. The slow gradation of rising in that line, and the improbability of ever making a fortune in it, without a capital to begin with, alienated the views of his riper years from the pursuits of business. His temper was too warm and impatient to submit to the plodding business of the counter.

When his engagement expired with the Bankers, he threw himself in the way of Fortune, wishing rather to suffer under embarrassments, with the chance of a propitious event, than barely to exist without any chance of those lucky hits which frequently come when least expected.—He occasionally engaged himself as a Lottery Clerk. He was afterwards engaged by an Insurance Broker, at a handsome permanent salary ; and it was here that he first imbibed a *penchant* for the Drama.

The

The company before the curtain proved at first as attractive to him as the performances on the Stage. His dress and address were perfectly genteel. A greater familiarity with the manners of the Actors drew him into closer observation of their respective merits; and suggested to him the idea of attempting a profession, which would not only gratify his ambition, if successful, but add largely to his income. The late Mr. HENDERSON was at that time the first Performer on the Stage; and our Hero had studied, with the most minute attention, every performance of that celebrated favourite of the Public, of which many similarities may be perceived in several of Mr. HARLEY's representations.

Having for many months considered the Drama with the greatest diligence, in which he was assisted by HENDERSON, with whom he became personally acquainted, and having perfected himself in the theoretical part, he resolved to practise.

In

In the country, he judged that by changing his name he might escape the injury such an attempt might do him in the eye of mercantile people ; and that, if unsuccessful, he might return to his situation without a blush. For this purpose he obtained letters of recommendation from some friends in London, whom he intrusted with his design, to Alderman HARVEY, of Norwich, and through the interest of that gentleman, he made his first attempt in the above city, as *Richard the Third*, on the 20th of April, 1785.

But his success was not adequate to his expectations. Many of the inhabitants of Norwich were rather too free in expressing their disapprobation, particularly to his *Comus*. But he was not discouraged ; and as he dressed well, had plenty of money in his pocket, and a confident address, he got into genteel company, and ingratiated himself so much with the leading people, that they made a point of supporting him on the Stage. Practice improved his

his talents as an Actor, and custom made them agreeable to his audience, who in a short time celebrated him as the most accomplished Performer that had been seen there for many years. He continued the hero of the Norwich Company several seasons. His fame reached London in such terms as gave reason to expect great profit from his performances, and he was engaged at a genteel salary by Mr. HARRIS for Covent-Garden Theatre; where he made his first appearance in the character of *Richard the Third*, about the beginning of October, 1789.

To decide on the abilities of a Performer in his first or even second season would be uncandid; but a few observations, from which it is presumed he may benefit, are surely admissible. Nature has not been very liberal to Mr. HARLEY. Though his person is agreeable, his face is inexpressive and obscure: his voice, though powerful, is harsh and inflexible. He has studied the transitions, the tones, and cadences

dences of Mr. HENDERSON, and incessantly endeavours to imitate them; but an insurmountable monotony will for ever preclude all chance of success. In tender impassioned passages, his tones are too much inflated, and his agitation too violent. This was very conspicuous in his performance in Mr. HAYLEY's *Eudora*, a Tragedy now consigned to oblivion.

Notwithstanding these advantages, Mr. HARLEY has repeatedly represented *Richard* and *Lear* with tolerable *eclat*; and as he is extremely assiduous, will probably, in time, deserve a larger portion of panegyric.

At the commencement of the Season 1791 and 1792, he discharged himself, for that most important of all reasons,—a deficiency of salary. Hitherto he had been content to obtain fame, with only forty shillings per week; but he now began to discover that *money* was more substantial; and after much altercation, and many a message between him and Mr. BARLOW,

Low, the Gentleman who manages these matters, it was agreed that he should have five pounds per week, with which he declared himself satisfied.

Miss DALL.

THIS young Lady is daughter of the late Mr. DALL, Royal Academician, and many years principal Scene-painter at Covent-Garden. She made her first public appearance in the *Oratorios* performed two years ago at the above Theatre, under the direction of Messrs. HARRISON and ASHLEY, and met with that liberal reception which modest merit is ever certain of experiencing. In the Books of the Performance of the Fifth Grand Musical Festival in Westminster-Abbey, soon after the Lent Season, her name appears as the fourth principal *Soprano*. The September following we find her distinguishing herself with STORACE, at the Colchester Musical Festival. From this period it seems that Miss DALL had not any particular engagement till the spring of the following year, when she appeared in the Comic Opera of the *Woodman*: her introduction the Stage is said to

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have

have arisen from the following circumstance.—At that period the Theatre could not boast of a leading Vocal Heroine; to supply the deficiency, and complete the *Dramatis Personæ* of the above favourite Piece, Mrs. PIELTAN was engaged at a very handsome stipend; it was soon, however, found that on the evenings of performance Mrs. P—— had literally too much *spirits*;—an able successor in the character was therefore deemed absolutely necessary, that the *run* of the Opera might not be impeded.—Miss DALL was fixed upon, and if we may rely on the newspapers of the day, she came forwards with only one rehearsal, and that on the day of her appearance, and at once restored the character to the elegant simplicity designed by the Author, and gave an additional effect to the Glees, &c. by the sweetness of her voice.—This part she performed twenty-three nights; the same season she played *Rosetta*, in *Lore in a Village*, for INCLEDON's Benefit, and *Eliza*, in *The Fitch of Bacon*, for that of Miss BRUNTON, now Mrs. MERRY. The following season Mrs. BIL-

BILLINGTON returned from Dublin, and resumed her situation.—At this period we find Miss DALL engaged at the York Subscription Concerts, in which city it seems she continued till the beginning of May last; for in the advertisement prefixed to the Songs of the New Comic Opera of *Just in Time*, performed for the Benefit of MUNDEN, the Author, after stating the grounds on which his Piece was finished, adds:

“ In this state it remained, when the idea suggested to the Writer, that its performance might render his Friend, Mr. MUNDEN, some trifling assistance, and upon that ground his first *Dramatic Bantling* is submitted to the Public, this evening, in its present form: but even of this satisfaction, he was nearly disappointed, by Mrs. BILLINGTON’s numerous engagements preventing her from studying a new character; and should have been so, had not Miss DALL been applied to, whose letter from York in answer stated, ‘That, *although she was a mere novice to the Stage, yet, if it was thought that her humble abilities could*

*‘ in the least supply the deficiency in the
‘ cast, she was extremely ready, declining
‘ all emoluments, to render her assistance,
‘ especially as the Opera was intended for
‘ the Benefit of so respectable a Character,
‘ and deserving a favourite of the Public,
‘ as Mr. MUNDEN.’*

In this Opera she accordingly appeared, and rendered the Author essential service by the exertion of her talents.—The flattering success of the Piece induced the Manager to accept it for the present season; and Miss DALL, who we understand is engaged, will doubtless again perform the principal female character.

Miss DALL, it seems, was a Pupil of Mr. MAZZINGHI's. Her voice, although not the most powerful, possesses much sweetness, and she runs the most difficult passages with singular ease, neatness, and rapidity; her shake, which is a natural one, is remarkably fine. In person, she is rather under the middle stature, but perfectly well-formed; and her manners are genteel and interesting.—
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In private life, her conduct is unblemished; and she will, unquestionably, when more *mellow* in her profession, prove an ornament to the Theatre, and a deserving favourite of the Public.

Since the above was put to press Miss DALL has appeared in her original character in the *Woodman*, and *Augusta*, in the New Comic Opera of *Just in Time*, in which she has fully justified our predictions, for she has not only proved herself a charming Singer, but a most promising Actress.

Mrs. WELLS.

WITH that sweetness of simplicity which characterises the rural innocence of unpolished nature—at once the admiration of refined breeding, whose decorous accomplishments lose their refulgence, when with the charms of the cottage maid contrasted—with the uncommon endowments of personal and mental captivations, whose bewitching powers endear most, when engaged in the delineation of artless rusticity, we bring forward Mrs. WELLS with all that fame that her predominating merits have long commanded.

In the town of Birmingham she was born. Her father was engaged in the manufactures of that place, and her mother, Mrs. DAVIES, kept a Tavern, whose good cheer, as any good thing will do, attracted the favour and company of the Theatrical Gentlemen; among whom was Mr. HULL. That Gentleman, as if Nature whispered to him

him the future greatness of Mrs. WELLS, was proud to stand her godfather at the christening.

Such was the worldly introduction of Miss DAVIES, now Mrs. WELLS. Early in her life the chilling hand of misfortune lay on her infant head; but it lay lightly. The pangs that may rend the breast of an adult, the breast of a babe affect not.

Her father became insane, and died in a mad-house. Her mother, whose monied affairs were embarrassed by the expence attending her husband's indisposition, found the business of Vintner clog on her fingers; and as she had caught a fondness for acting, by her intimacy with persons of that profession, she embarked her all upon the Stage, and, with two daughters on her hands, she obtained an engagement in Dublin.

The powerful aid of extraordinary talents was somewhat wanting to secure her the continual countenance of the Irish nation. She returned to England; and in Yorkshire, and different parts of

of the North, were her best abilities displayed. About this time it was that our young *Cowslip* first walked into public notice, and puerile as her exertions were, her sweet delicacy of visage, and elegant meekness of deportment, drew that which is the aim of all—general commendation.

The wandering steps of our young Heroine led her, with her tender mother, to Shrewsbury. Her ripening beauties, like the mid-day sun, at this time infused a warmth into every breast that came near her. Mr. WELLS, a Comedian in the same Theatre, felt forcibly the truth of this assertion, and his utmost efforts were exerted to obtain her. So young a heart was easily prevailed on. The Manager, Mr. MILLER, assisted at the nuptials, and poor *Cowslip* was wedded without knowing for what reason.

An union, in which affection, on the side of our fair one, had no share, and which was brought about by too sudden and too transitory a passion on the side of Mr. WELLS, could not be expected

expected to exist long. At Exeter the bridegroom became attached to a Lady who had formerly kept a Chandler's shop in Holborn, but who had now commenced Actress, and they both ran off to Ireland, where he has remained ever since.

For the present object of our story this was an event the most fortunate in her life. Unincumbered by a husband of no abilities, her own brilliancy of powers commanded more notice, and consequently more fame. Mr. CAILLEUR, impressed with the highest esteem for her talents, obtained for her an engagement at the Haymarket, and she made her first appearance on a London Stage about the year 1781.

So much beauty and Dramatic merit could not be suffered to depart the metropolis when once it had been seen in it. She was engaged for the Winter at Drury-Lane; and we may add, what in adding is but justice, that she stepped the more into good opinion the more she was seen; nor should her
spruce-

spruceness in the male habit be overlooked.

Her success, however, was not confined to Comedy alone. The powers of the immortal SIDDONS having rendered Tragedy fashionable, Mrs. WELLS, whose general talents are happy in depicting universal Drama, paid her orisons to the melancholy Melpomene: she played *Isabella* at one time for her benefit, and *Jane Shore* at another. The surprise excited at her attempt is not to be wondered at, when it is known that she was looked upon in the train of Thalia as a principal, and that the grief-rending scene she never yet had entered on.

The prejudice against her capability vanished as she appeared. The scenes of SOUTHERN and ROWE she pourtrayed with that natural animation and pleasing effect, which are only to be effected by sublimity of genius and sublimity of beauty. The majesty of SIDDONS was majesty indeed:—but the soft pathos and discriminating delivery
of

of Mrs. WELLS were delightful to every discriminating auditor ; and her shriek in *Isabella*, moved many tender hearts to shriek with her in unison.

Thus did her own merit do what merit always will do.—Her name as a Tragedian became honourable, as her name as a Comedian had been before.—The Public Advertiser, and the Morning Chronicle, two Papers at that time in high request for their Theatrical Observations, grew still into more request by the sweet and elegant delineations of her fascinating performances: the language of them was new ; and novelty, added to whim and peculiarity of expression, rendered them valuable as the Poems of *Della Crusca*, which will live with all Poems that deserve to live.

The fame built upon her Tragical exertions, Mrs. WELLS hoped would influence the Drury-Lane Managers to put her forward in that line ; but she was somewhat mistaken ; for, blind to their own interest, they were blind

blind to her excellence ; and with that commendable spirit that distinguishes conscious capacity, she went over to the Covent-Garden Manager, where she flourished in *Hermione*, *Imogen*, &c. but the cup and dagger not predominating at that House, Mrs. WELLS threw them aside.

The buzz of private conversation had long extolled her powers of mimicry; and her public exhibition of those powers had long been solicited in vain. In the Summer of 1787, soon after the opening of the Royalty-Theatre, she was, by the entreaties of her friends, and the offer of fifty pounds per night, induced to come forward with her imitations at that Theatre; and, in saying that the crowds were immense who went to see her; that the applause was general and incessant; and that her likenesses, particularly those of Mrs. SIDDONS and Mrs. CRAWFORD, were executed with the most rare facility and truth—we only say what thousands now in different parts
of

of the globe said at the time of her performance.

The fractious caprice of old age drove her several seasons from the Haymarket Theatre, where her *Cowslip*, her *Madge*, and her *Maude*, were resorted to with that great degree of avidity which distinguished the early part of Mrs. SIDDONS's career.—She, in the Season 1791, with her return, restored fashion to that House; but now she has again deserted it. Her Imitations she gives at her Benefits, where those who frequently know what it is to receive great Dramatic gratification, are sure to attend. The *Dramatist*, and other Pieces which she has patronized, best can speak the truth of this.

For several Summers she has given the Provincial Towns a taste of her exquisite Theatrical niceties. Cheltenham, Weymouth, and lastly Brighton, have been blessed with her wide-spread power of pleasing; and the general admiration of the Nobility and Gentry has been eclipsed by the particu-

lar patronage and attention of Their MAJESTIES.

Of those virtues that exalt the human race, Mrs. WELLS is by no means destitute:—her care of an aged mother can never be too much known; her benevolence to the unfortunate Mrs. EDWIN can never be enough praised; and her generosity to all objects of charity is well known to those who are proud of knowing her. But as this Lady has announced her own Memoirs, to be written by herself, and published in the course of the winter, we shall not further attempt that which we are certain will be done in so superior a manner by the original.

In the Theatrical hemisphere her abilities have long been admired; and with that admiration must cease all true taste. Simplicity characterises her superior acting; nor is Comedy or Tragedy lost in her hands. With due distinction, she may be called a Child of Nature; and with justice most rigid,

rigid, she may called a divine Performer. She is handsome and elegant in her person ; her face is completely beautiful ; and her leering smile is, with sensations the most pleasant, perfectly captivating.

Mr. FARLET,

HAS been educated from his infancy in Covent-Garden Theatre. His parents lived in Bow-Street, and were glad to permit him, while a child, to go upon the Stage as it produced some little addition to their income. It is not more than five or six years ago, since he performed the *Page* in the Tragedy of the *Orphan*, and at that time he did not appear to be more than eight or nine years old. He afterwards acted *behind* the curtain as *Call-Boy*, and we believe he still holds that appointment. The trifling characters allotted to him are chiefly *Servants* or *Fops*, but never of any great importance. He is however so very young that it would not be surprizing if he one day attains a much higher rank in the Theatre.

Mrs.

Mrs. ABINGTON.

IN developing the history of this Lady, we must differ materially from the many memoirs already given of her in various Magazines, &c. We shall adhere strictly to the truth, of which we have the most minute information: we must necessarily be very circumstantial, and relate trifles which might have been neglected, had not this new narration to combat and contradict all those already published.

In the best account, a search for her *immediate* descent is avoided; yet her family is traced back to CHRISTOPHER BARTON, Esq. a man of an ancient and honourable pedigree near Norton in Derbyshire, who at the accession of King WILLIAM III. left four sons, one a Colonel in that King's army, another a Ranger of one of the Royal Parks, the third a Prebend of Westminster, and the fourth (the youngest) was the grandfather of our present Heroine.

This genealogy we cannot controvert—but we must lament the misfortunes of the progeny, as Mrs. ABINGTON's father was a soldier in the Guards, and afterwards a cobbler in Windmill-Street, near the Haymarket; and her brother watered horses for many years in Hanway-yard, Oxford-street.

These and many other particulars would have been omitted, but that we suspect the Press has been influenced, and we are anxious to do justice to the history of so eminent an Actress; to explode falsehood, and to shew how the lowest individual may in time grace the most elevated circles.

Her father's earnings were too small to enable him to bestow any education on his children, or even to provide them bread; and FANNY BARTON, our present subject, was obliged to run errands for a livelihood, when a girl. Mr. BADDELEY can corroborate this fact: where he was apprentice to a cook, she fell down with a basket, and cut her arm on a broken bottle, the mark of which still remains.

She

She was engaged to run messages by a French Milliner, who lived in the first floor of the house now possessed by BAYLEY and LOWE, in Cockspur-street. In this situation she pleased much, and being very quick of apprehension, she soon picked up a smattering of the French language ; but her attachment to her old companions, in a short time superseded her duty—she neglected the business of her mistress, and was discharged.

A vender of *bouquets* was the next occupation she assumed, and she was well known about St. James's Park, by the title of *Nossegay Fan*. Her amours at this time were followed by a disagreeable consequence. After her health was restored in a public hospital, she found herself unable to go out for want of apparel. SALL PARKER, who at that time kept a *convenient house* in Spring-Gardens, while on a visit to some of her Nymphs, espied our disconsolate dame, and, after enquiring her situation, promised to relieve her. She accordingly mentioned the circumstances,

stances, accompanied with commiseration, to Mr. BYRON, a West-Indian of fortune, who was on the eve of taking her from public business, and who generously gave a six-and-thirty piece to clothe poor BARTON; and at the same time requested SALL to place her as a domestic in the house she was going to leave.

FANNY's quickness and address in handing the tea-kettle, or waiting at table, impressed Mr. BYRON with a favourable opinion of her sagacity; and on discovering that she could speak French, he recommended her to Mrs. PARKER, as an excellent waiting-maid, and she was immediately appointed to that office. Her mistress being deprived by her profession of the company of reputable female friends, and denied the company of disreputable ones by Mr. BYRON, FANNY was not only made her attendant, but associate; she was elegantly dressed out to accompany SALL PARKER to Vauxhall, and other public places—and now for the first time launched into genteel life.

Mr.

Mr. BYRON's pity changed into desire, when he saw the vivacity of Miss BARTON, aided by the artillery of dress; and he found no difficulty in obtaining her favours. But on Mrs. PARKER's discovery of the amour, she instantly discharged her rival, fearful that her own sovereignty over the generous West Indian might be subverted.

Miss BARTON had now seen something of the exterior of polite life, and had studied its manners. Being possessed of fine clothes, she resolved to resume her former occupation, but in a higher stile: she became the companion of the celebrated CHARLOTTE HAYES, now Mrs. O'KELLY, and was well-known at the genteel houses about Covent-Garden:—but she was more indebted to her vivacity than her beauty for pecuniary favours.

About this period, 1752, the late Mr. THEOPHILUS CIBBER, son of COLLEY CIBBER, Esq. Poet Laureat, (a Comedian of eminence in his days of prosperity) had obtained a licence of the
Lord

Lord Chamberlain to exhibit Plays for a certain number of nights at the Haymarket. To this Theatre our Heroine was invited to make her first appearance. The character she attempted was *Miranda*, in the *Busy Body*, which she executed with great spirit and propriety, remained a favourite at that Theatre during the season, and procured an engagement at the Theatre then under Mr. SIMPSON's, the Lower Rooms, in Bath.

Here she became an object of love to Mr. KING, and an object of jealousy to Miss BAKER, who then lived with that Gentleman. In the following Summer she performed at Richmond, where the late Mr. LACEY, then a principal Proprietor of Drury-Lane, addressed her with success, and in consequence of her kindnesses he engaged her for his own Theatre.

Miss BARTON now found the great want of a tolerable education, and laudably resolved to improve herself. She had been recommended to board
and

and lodge in a respectable house, and immediately engaged a Writing and Music Master, the last of whom, Mr. ABINGTON, insinuated himself into her affections, and secretly received favours, without the least injury to her character, until one night she lighted him down stairs, and, as the people of the house supposed, shut him out—she returned to the company of her hostess, and as she always had her bed warmed, the servant went at the usual time to do it;—but what was her astonishment when, on running the pan full of red hot coals in at the foot of the bed, it saluted the posteriors of Mr. ABINGTON, who leaped up with uncommon alacrity, and put on his clothes, while the maid-servant roared out “Murder! thieves! &c.”

The landlady instantly appeared, and upbraided the detected pair with their conduct. Miss BARTON, in defence, asserted marriage; but not being believed, they were obliged to leave the house late at night, and jointly find a lodging. In a few days after this, our
Heroine

Heroine caught the affections of a Creole, who, in three or four months expended about three thousand pounds upon her. He furnished, in the most elegant manner, a first and second floor in St. Martin's-Lane, and presented her with jewels, and many valuable presents. His friends, however, saw his folly, and intimated it to his father in the West Indies, who immediately dispatched a mandate for his return. Miss BARTON went with him to Portsmouth, where he repeatedly declared the sincerest affection for her; gave her a bank note of 500l. and assured her that on his return, which should be within twelve months, he would make her his wife, if she acted properly in his absence. Our Heroine surpassed him in her apparent anguish at parting;—he went on board the ship, and she returned next morning to London, and married Mr. ABINGTON, who, no doubt, threw a kind eye on her late acquired wealth.

Her

Her fond Creole, finding the wind had changed, and that the vessel would not probably sail for two or three days, resolved to pass a few happy hours with his *enamored*, and arrived in London about twelve o'clock at night. He knocked loudly at the door. The maid-servant came to the window, and enquired what he wanted. She was answered, that he was her master, and wanted Miss BARTON:—but what must have been his astonishment when he was informed, that there was no Miss BARTON in that house, as she had that day married Mr. ABINGTON, and was then in bed with her husband! With the bitterest exclamations, he insisted on seeing her. She slipped on some clothes, opened the door, and told him that it really was as the maid had informed him, but that she would go and stay all night with him nevertheless.—As he really loved her, this only aggravated his torture, and after bestowing some merited epithets, he deserted her for ever.

On perceiving that there was but little prospect of advancing at Drury-Lane house, as fast as an impatient desire of excelling prompted her, through the opposing interests of Miss MACKLIN and Miss PRITCHARD (introduced at this very period, under the warmest sunshine of Theatrical family interest, to public favour) she resolved on repairing to Ireland, whither she was accompanied by her husband.

To the courteous and hospitable inhabitants of that kingdom, she needed no other credentials than the Theatrical talents with which she was gifted by nature ; and they being called forth by the genial hand of public applause on the Dublin Stage (the best seminary for those of London) she not only shot forward, but even out-bloomed the fairest conceived hopes of her excelling in Thalia's department, and it became quite the fashion to name bonnets, caps, ribbons, &c. after her.

In this admired point of view, it is not to be wondered, that, among a people,

ple, one of whose characteristics is gallantry, many of the young fashionable Nobility and Gentry paid their complimentary addresses to so attractive an object, and to which it will hardly be doubted that she listened with an inclining ear.

Whether Mr. ABINGTON. winked at her conduct, or was ignorant of it, we cannot decide. Being a Royal Trumpeter, he was obliged to attend the Coronation of his present Majesty, and on his return to Dublin, arriving early in the morning, he went directly to his deary, and found her in bed with Mr. NEEDHAM. This produced an open rupture ; articles of separation were drawn up with all possible dispatch, nor has Mrs. ABINGTON cohabited with her husband ever since.

Mr. NEEDHAM, who was a Gentleman of family, fortune, and improved understanding, who had made the tour Europe, and was Member of Parliament for Newry, in the County of Down, took her to live with him ; and this connexion was brought to bear

through an approving choice of the mind on both sides rather than the gratification of any other wish. The pleasure arising from this intercourse became gradually so intense, that he delighted in no company so much as her's. He enjoyed a singular satisfaction in reading, explaining, and communicating every kind of cultivation to a mind he found so happily disposed to receive and profit by his instruction ; and from this time Mrs. ABINGTON became attached to the polite arts, in which, by her perseverance, she is now so accomplished.

Mr. NEEDHAM, being called to England upon particular business, our Heroine embraced this opportunity of revisiting her native country, where her vanity was soon gratified by a warm invitation from Mr. GARRICK ; but Mrs. PRITCHARD and Mrs. CLIVE were then possessed of those parts in which Mrs. ABINGTON had made so favourable an impression on the Dublin audience. The *Widow Belmour*, however, which is peculiarly adapted to her stile of acting,

acting, lay open to her, and established her in the Public's judgment as a valuable re-acquisition to the London Theatre, which favourable opinion was corroborated by her exhibiting some other characters, such as *Araminta*, in the *School for Lovers*; *Belinda*, in *All in the Wrong*, &c.

But another occasional slackening, as well as intermission of her Theatric advancement, was, Mr. NEEDHAM's very infirm state of health, whom she, from a sense of duty and affection, attended to Bath and other places, that might be thought the most conducive to his recovery; but a constitutional malady, under which he had laboured from his infancy, at last getting the better of his philosophic resolution, and threatening him with the approach of that final tribute, which is to be paid at one time or other by all mortal beings, he bethought himself of leaving out of the reach of adversity a faithful friend and companion, who had devoted herself to him; and his heirs dis-

charged, in a very honourable manner, the provision he made for her.

As soon as she recovered from her grief for such a loss, she resolved to make attaining the summit of *comic fame* the sole object of her future passion, and to that end most luckily intervened the Stage's privation of Mrs. PRITCHARD and Mrs. CLIVE, by which event she had an opportunity of appearing with *eclat* in *Estipbania*, in *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*; Mrs. Oakly, in the *Jealous Wife*; Maria, in the *Non-juror*; and what may be termed her *chef d'œuvre*, *Lady Teazle*, in the *School for Scandal*. Those characters justly raised her to the pinnacle of fame as a Comic Actress.

Conversant in amours, she now resolved to separate her lovers into two different classes: the first, those whose liberality might enable her to live in splendor; and the second, those whom her humour pitched upon. For this purpose, she had various houses in town for her various admirers; her assignations with Mr. JEFFERSON, formerly

merly of Drury-Lane, were made at a house near Tottenham-Court-road; while my Lord SH——NE, now Marquis of L——NE, allowed her fifty pounds per week, gave her an elegant house, the corner of Clarges-street, Piccadilly, and continued this generosity until he married. Mr. DUNDAS succeeded his Lordship as her humble servant.

Having some difference with the Managers of Drury-Lane, she in November 1782, made her first appearance at Covent-Garden, as *Lady Flutter*, in the *Discovery*. From this period her fame has been gradually on the decline, as she advances in years, and indeed her figure does not become the sprightly Girl or young Lady of fashion. To force attraction, she has had recourse to many exotics; *Lucy*, in the *Beggar's Opera*, and *Scrub*, in the *Beaux Stratagem*, she has lately represented; the novelty drew many people to see her, but the attempt acknowledged her declining sway, and lessened her estimation.

When

When her Dramatic powers failed, and consequently her pecuniary emoluments decreased, she still was anxious to support her usual magnificence. To their shame be it told, that many noble families admitted her on the most familiar and friendly terms; fond herself of flattery, she has studied, and is an adept in bestowing it on others: her intimacy with persons of fashion induced her to dip into their vices, and, by an unlucky turn of fortune, she was a few years ago deprived of her principal property at play.

This circumstance, we presume, was the cause of her continuing on the Stage, when her talents were so evidently on the decline. She performed in Dublin in the Summer 1791, but with no great degree of success; and we believe that she has now so far outlived her fame, that it is improbable she ever will be engaged again in London.

She still possesses all the elegant manners of polite life, and displays the evident remains of a great Actress; but

but it cannot be supposed that a corpulent Lady of sixty can happily personate a sprightly Girl of sixteen: her absence from the Theatres last Winter indicates her total retirement.

Mrs. ABINGTON has been as much admired as a Performer, and as much caressed by persons of the first distinction, as any of her predecessors. — Whatever dress she wore was generally adopted by the politest circles, and her example gave law to fashion. With common prudence her emoluments might have left her now in the possession of a genteel, if not ample fortune. But with her talents, she has not lost her passion for splendor; and her ambition of still appearing great when her sources of wealth were stopped, has perhaps sunk her into the most disagreeable difficulties.

Mr.

Mr. FAWCET.

THERE is a certain degree of ridicule attached to the profession of a Player, that the mind seems incapable of resisting; and which the powers even of GARRICK, Mrs. JORDAN, or Mrs. SIDDONS, has not *altogether* removed. In darker ages they have been considered as the foes of Religion, and condemned by the anathemas of the Church; the liberality of the present has discouraged every prejudice of this sort, and even honoured some of its professors with marks of distinction, the more honourable as they are more rare.

Whether it was from too much sensibility of the degradation, or from an opinion, built upon experience, of the probable poverty attending an Actor, Mr. FAWCET was strongly persuaded against the Stage, and every step was taken by his parents to prevent him from joining the Thespian train. This
is

is the more remarkable, as his father, who is noticed in the first volume of this work, was a member of a London Theatre, and it was natural to expect he would agree that his son should follow his own footsteps; but he is not the only Player who has wished his progeny to be bred up in a more honourable profession than his own: Mrs. SIDDONS, Mr. F. AICKIN, Mr. C. BANNISTER, &c may prove desires of a similar nature which have failed; Mr. FAWCET, senior, however, has more reason than them to disapprove of the profession, for his success and income on the Stage have been very considerable, while the others in both have been extremely fortunate.

Before his *penchant* for the Drama could have acquired much strength, our Hero was put apprentice to a linen draper, in London; and by the rigorous discipline of trade, and the great quantity of thought necessary to business, it was concluded that his attention would be totally estranged from the buskin, and confined to the counter.

counter. But this expectation proved ill founded, for instead of exerting himself in the shop, his mind was continually engaged in the Theatre, and negligence and contempt towards his employment, produced so much sourness on the part of his Master, and stubborn indifference on the part of himself, that he resolved to quit so uneasy a situation. He eloped to an itinerant Company of Comedians ; and he could not be much more pleased in giving scope to his inclinations, than his Master was, in being freed from such a torment.

He had seen but very few campaigns in the country, when the desertion of Mr. KNIGHT from the York Corps induced the Manager to engage Mr. FAWCET as his substitute. The list of parts which lay open to him, occasioned by the absence of his predecessor, and the encouragement given by the inhabitants of that city, called forth all his ability, and soon made him an established favourite. It was here that he was smitten with the charms

charms of Mrs. MILLS, then recently become a widow; and he married her. His fame in low Comedy reached London; and in the wish of supplying, if possible, the loss of the celebrated EDWIN, Mr. HARRIS engaged him for Covent-Garden Theatre, where he made his *debut* at the commencement of last season.

His success in the metropolis, has by no means been so great as the success of him for whose loss he was designed to compensate;—but nevertheless it has been highly flattering, and fully equal to what he could reasonably have expected. He made choice of *Jacob* in *He would be a Soldier*, for his first essay, and although that is a character in which EDWIN had not only been the original, but also a very great favourite, yet Mr. FAWCET performed it so much to the satisfaction of the town, that the Play was repeated several nights. He afterwards appeared in other parts with equal *eclat*, and particularly in *Jerry Sneak*, which he coloured with a richness of humour, inferior to none of his predecessors.

Mr. FAWCET has evidently studied EDWIN's manner, and he comes nearer him in similarity and talent, than any other Actor. As he is very young, it must be owing to his own negligence, or the want of encouragement in the Manager, if he does not soon become the greatest favourite in EDWIN's line, to whom he seems calculated to be the best successor.

Mrs.

THE GREEN ROOM.

Mrs. ACHMET.

IT is the duty of a Biographer to veil the early foibles of those whose subsequent conduct inclines to virtue. To reproach the penitent is to deter from reformation. They should be gently, and even courteously, deprived of their ill habits; nor should the insolence of ostentatious purity ever wound them; they should be allured into love of the change, and not again driven into vice by austerity and mortification.

To mention Mrs. ACHMET's early situation would be malevolent, were her conduct still irreproachable. Publicly known as Miss EGAN, of an *easy* and *obliging* temper, the debauchées of Dublin celebrated her beauty; and the turn of her mind suggested to Mr. WHITE, who had studied under the veteran SHERIDAN, the idea of introducing her on the Stage. Mr. WHITE was entrusted with some little authori-

ty in Smock-alley Theatre ; he over-rated his abilities as a Teacher of Acting, and, pleased to find his pupil favourably received, he attributed to his instructions what was really owing to her own beauty.

The supposed success of Mr. WHITE's skill operated, however, in Mrs. ACHMET's behalf ; that Gentleman extolled her talents in every company to which he had access. In a Summer tour to Belfast, she was likewise improved by LEE LEWES, and in a short time she acquired considerable reputation as an Actress. Her charms, aided by the advantageous station of the Stage, kindled a flame in the breast of Mr. ACHMET, who took her into keeping ; and as that Gentleman's memoirs are rather extraordinary, a digression into them, we trust, will here prove very agreeable.

Mr. ACHMET, whose real name is CAIRNS, was born in the North of Ireland, where he served an apprenticeship to an Apothecary, and afterwards engaged as a Shopman in the same profession,

profession, in Dublin. His disposition was not at all adapted to still life; and eager to ramble, or what is mis-termed *to see the world*, he deserted the counter, and engaged himself as a Surgeon to a privateer. In that capacity he experienced many difficulties; was taken prisoner by the French, and we believe, he voluntarily entered into the squadron of THUROT, and landed with that enterprising adventurer on different parts of the Irish coast, to the great terror of the natives.

Whether he was satiated with a sea-life, or apprehensive of falling into the hands of his countrymen, he thought it prudent to desert the French service, and making the best of his way to London, the great Theatre for talents of every description, he engaged himself as an attendant in some very elegant Baths, on which his own reflections suggested many improvements. Hoping to turn his observations to advantage, he visited Dublin, intending to erect a set in that city, and communicated his plan to Mr. JEBB, and one or two other Gentlemen of the Faculty.

Those Gentlemen agreed that his scheme was very good, but doubted its success, unless he assumed the character and garb of a Turk. To this Mr. CAIRNS assented, though without any other qualification than a confident assurance, He took the name of ACHMET, and opened a subscription, which was soon filled in the most liberal manner: he built his Baths in an ingenious and superb style; and the popularity of his undertaking exceeded his most sanguine expectations.

Being tall and handsome in his person, his dress and solemnity imposed upon the mob; but he found great difficulty in deceiving men of enlightened minds, who sometimes questioned him, as to his avowed place of nativity, and wondered at his genuine Irish brogue. To such enquiries he replied with a sigh, and begged that his own country might not be mentioned, as the recollection of his sufferings in it distracted his thoughts and depressed his spirits. In this manner he attempted to evade discovery; and though the majority

majority of the inhabitants in Dublin, believed him to be a good Ottoman, yet the discerning few laughed heartily at the deceit ; and as his Baths were completely elegant and useful, they were resorted to by crowds of the first rank. He gave them up two days in the week to the poor gratis ; was making a fortune, and in every respect deserved that encouragement as an Irishman, which he obtained as a Turk.

Miss EGAN had not lived with Mr. ACHMET twelve months before she was pregnant, and pretending one evening to be taken in labour, she dispatched her Mahometan for the Midwife, but in his absence she eloped to the country with an Officer. The good Mussulman swelled with indignation on his return, yet unwilling to lose his fair one, immediately set out in pursuit of her, and to make himself legal possessor, he married her on his return.

An Act of Parliament having passed for building a new bridge in Dublin, the ground where Mr. ACHMET's Baths stood was found necessary for the purpose,

pose, and a fair price was voted for them. He erected another set equally elegant, in another part of the city; but his being an Irishman being now generally believed, the public were not so liberal in encouraging him; his Baths were daily less and less frequented, until his pecuniary concerns became a little embarrassed, and he relinquished the whole scheme.

Mrs. ACHMET retained a respectable rank in the Dublin Theatre, and had performed at Shrewsbury, and other parts of England, when she was engaged at Covent-Garden, and opened that Theatre in the character of *Juliet*, in September, 1789. Her exertions in that part were at first rather feeble, but the beautiful delicacy of her person and countenance operated in her favour, and as she displayed great animation in the fourth Act, where she swallows poison, she was very warmly applauded. The piece was repeated several nights.

After that time she appeared in various parts, both in Tragedy and Comedy,

Comedy, with success. The Green Room says, that her attempting *Sir Harry Wildair* offended the Deputy-Manager, who considered it as his part. We cannot vouch for the truth of this assertion, but it carries probability with it, as after the period alluded to she was very much thrown into the shade, and at the conclusion of the Season discharged: her talents are, however, respectable, particularly in sentimental Comedy, and might have been very useful in the Theatre. She is now in Ireland, where, it has been said, but we hope without foundation, that she is again playing her former character.

Mr.

Mr. P O P E.

BY depicting heroes and heroines on the canvas, this gentleman seems to have caught the desire of depicting them in a more animated manner on the stage; and though his merit in the former was praise-worthy, yet his merit in the latter has brought him into still more notice and emolument.

He is a native of Cork in Ireland, where he early studied drawing, and had arrived at such proficiency in the art of painting, that some of his pieces are highly spoken off. He very early imbibed a fondness for the Drama, and performed *Oroonoko*, and several other parts in Cork merely to try his skill. Miss YOUNGE, being there at that time, was so delighted with his talents, that she recommended him to Mr. HARRIS, and exerted all her influence in his favour.

His first appearance at Covent-Garden was in his darling part of *Oroonoko*,
about

about the conclusion of the year 1784; and he personated the unfortunate Prince with such feeling and animation, that aided by his powerful melodious voice he astonished all present, and gave the greatest reason to expect that he would soon shine the first Tragic Actor on the Stage. The play was repeated many nights, and crowds went to see it.

But when he divested himself of his sable visage, the critics discovered that his countenance was not formed for Tragedy. His round face was found incapable of expressing grief, joy, or disdain; nevertheless, his handsome figure, powerful sweet voice, the natural fire which breathed in every word; and above all, the tender yet warm manner in which he pourtrayed the *Lover*, rendered him a great favourite, particularly with the fair sex, who universally allowed that no man upon the Stage knew how to take a Lady delicately by the hand but himself.

As Mrs. SIDDONS had at this time brought Tragedies into great fashion,
Mr.

Mr. HARRIS, with HENDERSON, POPE, HOLMAN, Mrs. CRAWFORD, and Miss YOUNGE, was able to represent them with great *eclat*; and the public was equally divided in opinion about the excellence of the two last-mentioned Gentlemen.

Whether from gratitude or love, Mr. POPE soon after married Miss YOUNGE; and as Mr. HOLMAN disagreed with the Manager, and left the Theatre, Mr. POPE got possession of most of his parts, such as *Romeo*, *Hamlet*, &c. and Mr. HENDERSON being dead, he was for a few Seasons the principal Tragedian at the Theatre.

But Mr. HARRIS, who knows that novelty is the delight of a London audience, re-engaged HOLMAN in 1790, and as a jarring about parts was apprehended, Mr. POPE thought proper to go to Edinburgh, where he was a very great favourite.

Since the loss of Mr. HENDERSON, no Actor has appeared, who plays so much from the heart as Mr. POPE; had nature been as kind to his countenance, which

which is, however, rather handsome off the Stage, as he has been to his person and voice, with a very little more attention to the Graces, he would be one of the most excellent Actors that ever appeared upon the London Stage:—he would be what we may suppose of KEMBLE with POPE's voice and animation.

During an absence of two or three years from the London Stage, he paid considerable attention to his first study, the art of Painting, and it was even reported, that he never more would wield the truncheon. But his occasional performances in Country Theatres sufficiently contradicted that assertion. He is re-engaged at Covent-Garden Theatre, and made his first appearance there this Season as *Lord Townley*, a character which he supports with great manliness and energy; he has also performed *Oroonoko*, and other favourite parts, nor has he fallen off in point of ability, or in the public favour.

Mrs. PITT.

ALTHOUGH this lady cannot boast of eminence as a general Actress, yet in her own particular department she certainly stands unrivalled. The bounds of this volume will not permit us to include every insignificant member of the Haymarket and Covent-Garden Theatres: yet the peculiar merit of Mrs. PITT entitles her to equal praise as the representative of old women, as the abilities of Mrs. SIDDONS distinguish her in the more dignified walks of Tragedy.

Mrs. PITT is a native of London. Her brother has many years kept a Broker's shop in Moorfields. We cannot precisely explain her reasons for engaging in the Drama, or her various adventures in many itinerant Companies; but it is well known that no Theatric dame has given greater scope to her passions, or has been more frequently concerned in amours; of one of which,
Mrs.

Mrs. DAVENETT, of the same Theatre, is said to be a living monument.

In no situation of life is the conduct of females less reproached by the professional sisterhood than on the Stage, and particularly in country Companies, where the Ladies are often as free in conferring favours, as Gentlemen are eager to solicit them; and where the deficiency of emolument from their mimic exertions, is sometimes necessary to be supplied by a prostitution of their charms; from which they are not deterred by the odium that attaches to women in more respectable societies.—But whether indigence or inclination induced Mrs. PITT to sacrifice to Venus, we cannot at this time determine.

She had acquired considerable reputation in performing *Chambermaids* in the country, when the London Managers, judging her talents to be above mediocrity, engaged her; nor has she proved unworthy their choice. Her age now obliges her to throw aside the gaiety of youth, and to confine

herself to loquacious old women; for which her venerable appearance, squal-ling voice, and natural humour, are happily adapted. The *Nurse* in *Romeo and Juliet*, *Diana Trapes* in the *Beggar's Opera*, and *Dorcas* in *Cymon*, are so justly depicted by her, that we at once pronounce her a phenomenon in that line of acting; and are as highly charmed with her portraits as with those of JORDAN, SIDDONS, or PARSONS.

Mr.

Mr. EVATT.

HAD this Gentleman continued in the business to which he was originally bred, and pursued it with the same ardour as he has done the Stage, with his habits of life he at this time would, in all probability, have been a thriving, if not a rich Shopkeeper:—but he seems to live in hopes of one day being a PALMER or a KEMBLE; and although we would rejoice in his arrival at such eminence, for his assiduity and modesty deserve reward; yet we are sorry to think that his coldness, and apparent bashfulness, together with a certain awkwardness of person and deportment, are likely to preclude him long, if not for ever, from making a conspicuous figure on the boards.

Mr. EVATT was a Shopman, if not an Apprentice, to Mr. DYDE, the Haberdasher in Pall-Mall. His first essays on the Stage were made in some wretched itinerant Companies in the

vicinity of London, through the distresses and vicissitudes of which he is not of sufficient importance to be followed. We now find him engaged at Covent-Garden and the Summer Theatres, where he certainly renders himself useful, though in very trifling characters. He has, however, this recommendation, that he is generally perfect in the words of his part, and he pays particular attention to his duty—qualities as requisite on the Stage as behind the counter, and of which the Managers are no doubt sensible.

Mr.

Mrs. MARTYR.

IT has been asserted by very good judges, that a certain degree of diffidence and timidity is absolutely necessary to excite the attention, and call forth the talents of Theatrical Candidates; but it must be admitted, that too violent an agitation of the spirits rather damps than displays merit; and on the contrary, that a total insensibility argues a want of feeling, incompatible with true enlightened genius.

Mrs. MARTYR, with an easy indifference, rattles through her parts, and sometimes gets applause, but very seldom takes pains to deserve it. With an excellent voice, a pretty figure, and a sprightly agreeable face, she has been twelve years on the Stage, without making much improvement.

She is daughter to Mr. THORNTON, formerly a reputable Taylor in Southampton-

ampton-buildings. At an early period she discovered a fondness for public amusements and company; and having a fine musical voice, she became passionately desirous of being heard in public, sanguinely believing it would procure her great reputation, and place her among the favourite Performers of the Town—the great object of her ambition.

Her first introduction to general notice, was at Vauxhall, where her powers were very much commended; and she was engaged the following Season for Covent-Garden Theatre. *Rosetta* was the part fixed on for her *debut*; nor were her efforts passed over in silence by the audience.

Miss THORNTON being young, pretty, and agreeable—possessed of a charming voice, and an unblemished character, made some noise in the Theatrical world;—and, as is usually the case with handsome Actresses, whose faces are new to the Public, she was surrounded by a long list of beaux, but

but Captain MARTYR's suit being honourable, she married him.

Her conjugal virtues were often impeached; and her partiality for Messrs. WILD and MAHON, was very freely talked of in the *Green Room*. The boasted favours of the latter Gentleman having reached the ears of her husband, Captain MARTYR reprobated his licentious tongue in very severe terms. This produced a rupture, that proceeded to blows in an open Coffee-Room; but the Captain, considering his antagonist, who was a Musician, beneath him, refused to meet him in the field.——He was stigmatized as a coward, his wife openly deserted him; and he was soon after imprisoned in the King's Bench for debt, where he died.

Mr. WILD (the Prompter at Covent-Garden Theatre) *gives the word* in very amorous tones, and is a great favourite of Theatric Ladies. The report is, that living with Mrs. MARTYR, he took a lesson by the fate of his predecessor

decessor in the Lady's affections ; he concluded, perhaps rightly, that as she had behaved ill to her husband in return for good usage, it would be the best policy to treat her in an opposite manner. He therefore preached the doctrine of subordination, and enjoined obedience in terms that frequently occasioned temporary separations ; but Mrs. MARTYR always, it seems, solicited a reconciliation, and lived with this Gentleman, until by an accident *one of his legs* was disabled ; *she then deserted him.*

Report says, she has been offered settlements by different Gentlemen ; but her's is not a passion that *money* can gratify. She now lives with Mr. PARKE, the celebrated *Oboe Player*, and their *duets* have lately produced a *trio*.

In her profession she seems to despise all art, and depends entirely on her natural abilities. She is a neat breeches figure, and acquired great fame as the *Page*, in the *Follies of a Day* :

Day: her sprightliness and smile (which she most liberally displays) always insure her a favourable reception; but she is not, and probably never will be, a first-rate Actress or Singer.

Mr.

Mr. THOMPSON,

HAS been so long upon the boards of Covent-Garden Theatre in the humble capacity of *King, Lord, Officer,* and *Attendant*, that his memoirs are as uninteresting behind, as his exertions generally are before the curtain; yet we must confess that in *Old Men* he sometimes delivers a tender passage with great feeling; but he is made so much the pack-horse of every evening, and that in such obscure parts, that whatever judgment he has, it must be smothered by his load of business. He is now too old to think of attaining any greater eminence in his profession; and although he can scarcely be known by name to the frequenters of the Theatre, yet he must be well known in the Green Room by the repeated calls made upon him for his services; and in the cast for which he is selected, we know none that would discharge the duty better.

Mrs.

MR. BILLINGTON.

COVENT-GARDEN Theatre has always been distinguished for its superiority and excellence in Musical pieces and Pantomines; while that of Drury-Lane has held pre-eminence in Tragedy and Comedy. The feats of the motley-coloured Gentleman, when directed by RICH, and the charming Operas introduced by BEARD, proved equally attractive as the abilities even of GARRICK. And so sensible was that able Player and Manager of the public attachment to *sound* and *show*, that he often brought forward such pieces, though few of them received any proportionate share of approbation with those of his competitors.

Mr. HARRIS, the present Manager, and principal Proprietor of Covent-Garden Theatre, has followed the steps of his predecessors; and though his Pantomimes have not been so ingenious, his profits have been more considerable.

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I.

siderable. His success is entirely ascribable to unprejudiced, impartial conduct, in giving scope to abilities that bring him money. He regards merit only as the town follows it, and regulates his theatric arrangements entirely by the public taste. He has rendered Operas more alluring than ever; and principally by the attractive power of the present subject.

The superior taste and execution of Mrs. BILLINGTON may, in some degree, be supposed to have descended from her father, who was a German Musician, and her mother, the late Mrs. WEICHSELL, whose warblings in Vauxhall must be remembered by many. The first attempts of Miss WEICHSELL were heard with delight by her parents, who bestowed the utmost pains on her education; and her first introduction to the town was at the Haymarket Theatre, about fourteen or fifteen years since, in a benefit concert for her mother.

She officiated at many public and private concerts, in London, Bath, Bristol, &c. and so late as 1782 was
looked

looked upon by the most eminent amateurs as a prodigy in the science, particularly as a performer on the Piano Forte. About this time Mr. BILLINGTON paid his addresses, and his personal recommendations soon prevailed upon her to marry him.

The Stage seemed to be more pregnant with advantages, and promised more emolument, permanency and fame, than any other sphere in which she could employ her talents. Soon after her marriage with Mr. BILLINGTON, she entered into articles with Mr. DALY, the Manager in Dublin, where she became a very popular Singer; and where her husband was engaged for the orchestra.

Among the Gallants of Dublin it may be supposed that her charming person did not pass unnoticed; nor did she haughtily repel those who addressed her. Mr. KRAY was the first who engaged her attention to an eminent degree, and pretending a great want of some particular music, she dispatched her husband to Liverpool,

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while

while she visited Mr. K. But finding that Mr. BILLINGTON was entitled by law, and determined to receive her salary at the Theatre, she thought it prudent to be reconciled to him.

Mrs. DALY had long suspected her husband and our heroine, and had watched them with vigilance and caution. One evening she saw them, through the key-hole, in the dressing-room, and without disturbing the happy couple, she brought Mr. BILLINGTON to enjoy the prospect likewise. But that Gentleman, instead of taking immediate vengeance, was anxious to expose the scene to others, in order that he might be enabled to commence a prosecution.

Mr. BILLINGTON now talked loudly of the matter, and of obtaining ample redress in a court of law. Proceedings had begun; but the Lady, whether from shame, or a desire of screening her paramour, vowed, that if the affair came to public trial, she would never more appear on the Dublin Stage. Mr. DALY then declared, that if she refused

fused performing, he would prosecute her husband for the sum of 500l. stated in the articles which Mr. BILLINGTON had signed, and which would be forfeited if Mrs. BILLINGTON declined fulfilling her engagement.

In this predicament, Mr. BILLINGTON thought, that as he was certain of being obliged to pay the 500l. and that as the damages to be awarded by a jury would probably be but small, his wife's character not being the most immaculate, it would be better to hush up the matter; and after having made the whole quite public, he took his *dutiful* spouse again into his favour.

Mrs. BILLINGTON's victory on this occasion made her less careful of appearances than formerly. The late Duke of RUTLAND, then Lord Lieutenant, became her admirer; but the Duchess being universally esteemed, our Heroine was rendered particularly obnoxious by this last intimacy; in-somuch, that finding the voice of the populace very much against her, she

obtained letters of recommendation from his Excellency to the Marquis of CAERMARTHEN, then Secretary of State, who had influence to obtain her the honour of having her first appearance at Covent-Garden commanded by their Majesties, which was as *Rosetta*, in *Love in a Village*, Feb. 13, 1786.

This uncommon and honourable distinction gave great consequence to Mrs. BILLINGTON at her *entrée*; yet her vocal abilities were not so generally admired in her first as in subsequent seasons. Mrs. BANNISTER had been for years the reigning favourite; her stile of singing was simple, correct, and pleasing, but unenriched and unadorned with those delightful exuberances of fancy, that universally captivate and astonish.

Though the musical world were enraptured with Mrs. BILLINGTON from the first moment she appeared, yet the middling class could not perfectly relish her novel and foreign stile, until they were familiarized to it. A trip to Italy and France, in the Summer, with
that

that scientific teacher SACCHINI, was of great service, as it enabled her to make much observation and improvement.

But her obliging temper could not resist the importunities of afflicted swains in this country, more than in Ireland. A Royal Duke, known by the name of *Squire Morgan* in an affair of gallantry with Lady G——R, about twenty years ago was fascinated by her smiles, and attended her as constantly as the public applause every night she performed; but whether his Highness found his love too expensive, or whether the Lady found a more agreeable mate, she soon after became attached to Mr. B——L, a Gentleman celebrated as an amateur in the Mendozian science, with whom, we believe, she still lives on amicable terms.

Mr. and Mrs. BILLINGTON have now renounced the vulgar prejudices of education, and live upon more liberal philosophic principles, than the narrow ideas of some religionists prescribe. The quarrels of man and wife they happily prevent by giving each other unlimited

limited liberty. He receives her salary, and nurses it for future occasions; and she calls upon him at his house in Poland-street, on her way from Brompton to the Theatre, every day she plays, and enquires in a very friendly manner after his health.

Finding that her talents were less attractive than formerly, she in the latter end of the year 1790, went to Ireland, and returned to London last Season, much improved in her personal appearance and vocal powers. In the course of the Winter, a Pamphlet, entitled "*Memoirs of Mrs. BILLINGTON*", appeared, which represented her past life as completely infamous. The slight sketch here given is praise, when compared with it; yet we hope the most odious parts were false. An Indictment was preferred against the Publisher, and he pleaded guilty; declaring that, although the nature of the prosecution did not permit him on the trial to prove the truth, he would, when called up for judgment, produce affidavits in support of the facts. But a compromise, we believe, has taken place between
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the parties: the Publisher has not been called up for judgment in consideration of his selling no more of the Pamphlets. Thus Mrs. BILLINGTON has acted with prudence, when it was almost too late. Being conscious of her vulnerable character, she should not have brought it to the ordeal of a court of law. It appears to us from a letter inserted in the Work, that she is wholly indebted for this Publication to the imprudence of her husband, who thought proper to threaten the man whose conduct merited their gratitude. For our own parts, we feel extreme regret that we cannot say any thing in favour of the private life of so beautiful and charming a woman.

To say what has been said a thousand times of this Syren of the Stage, that her voice is exquisite, her execution inimitable, her compass extensive, her intonation just, and her shake perfect, would indeed be saying the truth, but not the whole truth.

The compass of this Singer's pipe is doubtless extensive, but not so much as has been imagined. In the lower part it

is very limited. Of this she is sensible : and in her *bravura airs* often substitutes one *octave* for another ; a licence which passes unobserved by the million, but escapes not the notice of cultivated scientific ears. It is no further censurable than being an act of rebellion against the Composer, and sometimes inverting the chords of the accompaniments. It is like the wild luxuriance of poetical imaginations, which, though against the cold rules of the Critic, constitutes the value of true poetry. In airs of expression, the enchanting sweetness of her voice and manner is beyond all praise. Her attitudes, although in general graceful, would, however, be improved by omitting the inelegant one of pressing her hands against her bosom, in passages that require exertion. It never fails to communicate ideas of labour, struggle, and pain. The Heroines of the Italian Opera excel her as much in attitudes, as she excels them in voice and taste.

Though some singers are more sublime, yet not one, in our opinion, is so pathetic, correct, and delicate. So nice

is

is her ear, that she can immediately point to any instrument out of tune, let the number accompanying it be ever so great. She is indefatigable in her attention to the business of the Stage, and to improve in her profession, and we must say her endeavours have not been fruitless. There is a softness—a peculiar bewitching sweetness in her manner, that wonderfully prepossesses every auditor in her favour. The feeling and discrimination with which she sings "*Cease your funning*," in the *Beggar's Opera*, proves that those airs which are listened to with indifference from other Singers, may be rendered new, exquisite, and highly attractive, by the magic sounds and excellent judgment of Mrs. BILLINGTON.

Mrs. BILLINGTON very frequently, and it is confessed, very happily, introduces new Songs into old Pieces—and indeed every thing she does on the Stage seems highly to please the Public. She is also a first-rate Harpsichord Player; and it is rather surprising that Mr. HARRIS has not thought of bringing

ing forward this accomplishment, as he is very justly noted for exhibiting his Performers with every advantage.

Her person, though not completely elegant, is genteel and pleasing ; and of her simple, delicate, and beautiful countenance, the powers of description fail us altogether. It is alike superior to the delineation of the pen, and the colouring of the pencil.

Mr.

Mr. POWELL,

LIKE Mr. BADDELEY, was first occupied in pleasing the palate; and his success as a disciple of *Heliogabalus* was equal to his success as a disciple of *Thespis*. When very young he leaped at once from the kitchen to the Stage, and for a long time he had much reason to regret the change, since, in gratifying his vanity with a *truncbeon* and *copper lace*, he had frequent occasion to lament the want of *solid pudding*.

The first time we find him comfortably situated is in the Bath Theatre, where for several years he represented a list of parts, almost the same as those he is now in possession of at Covent-Garden; and as his wife, who is sister to Mrs. WARD of the Drury-Lane Company, was also engaged there, their joint salaries amounted to a tolerable income; and Mr. POWELL was esteemed both in public and private. But in 1789, he absented himself a few nights from his duty in Bath, purposely to

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perform

perform in Salisbury, which offended the Managers so much that they discharged him.

He was engaged at Covent-Garden Theatre about two years ago, and since that time he has made himself very useful to the Managers and agreeable to the Public. The line of characters he principally sustains are the second or third-rate Old Men; and although he appears in parts of another complexion, yet he always acquits himself very respectably, and indeed he never attempts any thing of sufficient importance to render him disagreeable, supposing his talents were less commendable than they are.

Mr.

Mr. F A R R E N.

THOUGH Spouting Clubs have afforded a luxuriant theme of ridicule to many Writers, yet we do not find that they have afforded so many good Actors as might be supposed, from the frequent mention we meet of them; not but most of our Performers have occasionally peeped into those seminaries; yet, excepting the Hero of this page, we know none in any esteem whose talents were first noticed in them.

Mr. FARREN was an apprentice to a *Tin-Smith*, in St. Martin's-le-Grand, when his breast first glowed with desire to wield the truncheon. As *Davy* says in *Bon Ton*, "A six-penny-worth at one of the Houses" was his greatest gratification; yet he was often obliged to depart before the Play was over, to prevent the remonstrances or reproaches of his master.

While these six-penny gentry are waiting at the doors until the time

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arrives

arrives for the admission of half-price, they discourse on the merits of the Performers with the greatest freedom, gravity, and confidence ; and among those *celestial* Critics Mr. FARREN soon distinguished himself by his acute remarks. Flattered by his ingenuity as an amateur, he was led to put in practice the improvements himself had suggested ; and as his apprenticeship was drawing towards a conclusion, and he had greater liberty of enjoying his evenings from home, he became a member, and a conspicuous one, of a *Spouting Club*, at the One Tun in the Strand.

Here he found more difficulty than he expected, in the practical part of the profession, and submitted with great deference and attention to the corrections of his pronunciation. He was recommended to Mr. YATES, who, pleased with his appearance, voice, and good sense, apprenticed him to the *Buskin* when his time expired with the Tin-man.,

Mr.

Mr. YATES was at that time, and still is, Manager and Proprietor of the Birmingham Theatre; to that town he conveyed our young Hero, who made his *debut* with evident indications of ability. He continued his probation in the country, and reflected such honour on the judgment of his Tutor, as induced Mr. YATES to bring him out at Drury-Lane, in the Tragedy of *Medea*, for his wife's Benefit.

His appearance and voice impressed the Audience with favourable ideas of his talents. The spirit he evinced, though rather uncouth, it was hoped experience would polish, and that when placed in the genial soil of London, those gifts which Nature had bestowed on him, would render him an excellent Actor, when refined and moulded by art:—nor was the Public much mistaken, as he has proved himself, if not a first-rate, yet a respectable second-rate actor.

Mr. YATES obtained him an engagement in Drury-Lane; and as Love forms a leading feature in the

memoirs of the histrionic heroes, Mr. FARREN about this time commenced an attachment, which still subsists, with a Mrs. H——, whose husband was a respectable tradesman in Worcester, and to whom she had eight children.

After the demise of Mr. GARRICK, Drury-Lane was destitute of any Tragic Actor of merit, and in the general encouragement which was given to the exertion of talents, Mr. FARREN had every opportunity he possibly could wish for. He had already been commended; he was young, and the Managers were determined to put his powers to the most ample test, in the hope of drawing forth such abilities as might honour and serve their Theatre. *Othello* and other first-rate Characters he represented with considerable *eclat*; and though there were many advocates in his favour, yet his success did not attract numbers, and consequently his elevation was transient.

Mrs. SIDDONS soon after made her *entrée*; and Mr. FARREN imagining himself

himself thrown too much in the shade in the Plays with that lady, and being refused her assistance by the Proprietors on his Benefit night, though she performed for Messrs. SMITH, PALMER, BENSLEY, and BRERETON; he conceived himself ill-treated, and when the term of his articles expired, he enlisted under the banners of Mr. HARRIS, at Covent-Garden ; where he was allowed for some time to tread the heights of the Drama, but where he is now nearly fallen into the same sphere in which he officiated at Drury-Lane.

About eight years ago he formed an intimacy with a Mr. P——ts, a gentleman possessed of somewhat more than a thousand per annum ; and such affection resulted from that intimacy, that Mr. FARREN easily persuaded him to come and live in his house. He has taken an elegant mansion in Gower-street, Bedford square. Mr. P——, who is uncommonly docile, submits his income to his friend's management, and this, with the emoluments arising from his Theatrical exertions, and

and an annuity of two hundred pounds possessed by Mrs. FARREN, enable them to live in great splendour. They keep a carriage, footmen, &c. and Mr. FARREN thinks there is no necessity of undeceiving the world, by telling that he is not at the whole expence.

The theatrical fame of Mr. FARREN is certainly at its height. He formerly pleased the eye both in countenance and person, but is now grown rather clumsy.—His voice is very powerful, and capable of variation; and although he seems to have laboured to express his Author with great animation and beauty, yet his efforts have not extended beyond passive propriety. The *graces* he should particularly court, for his deportment is by no means genteel; and his passion too often makes him descend from the dignity of his character, by staring, and rolling his eyes, and suffering his face to redden with the heat of a testy Welchman.

Mrs.

Mrs. ROCK,

IS a literary genius of the first class, whom we are surprised has not yet been ranked with the Mrs. INCHBALDS, the Miss WILLIAMESS, the Miss BURNEYS, and the Mrs. ROBINSONS of the day. Her attachments for reading has somewhat impeded her Dramatic studies; and in proof of this, we cannot resist the inclination we feel to relate an anecdote of this Lady, which appeared in one of the public newspapers.

Her husband, who is also mentioned in this Work, brought in a piece of pork one forenoon, and desired that it might be roasted for dinner. Mrs. Rock was in bed, busily employed in perusing a favourite Novel, which she could not upon any condition quit: she, however, suspended the pork by a string before the fire, but could not leave her favourite book for the purpose of dressing herself; she therefore, in order to get her husband's dinner ready,

ready, and at the same time pursue the interesting story, pulled the bed close to the fire, and pushing her foot out at the bottom of it, lay, devouring the novel, while at the same time she every now and then made the pork twirl round with her great toe!

Mrs. Rock performed a considerable time in the country, before she was enrolled under the banners of Covent-Garden. Her *forte* is entirely in *Chambermaids*, for which her manner and person are perfectly calculated, and in general she represents them with much truth and spirit; but she is never entrusted with characters of importance.

Mr.

Mr. DAVIES.

FROM the well-known propensity of this Gentleman, we presume that if he were to give his own Memoirs, they would be replete with egotism. He is remarkable for the facility with which he asserts, and as remarkable for having his assertions disbelieved. We shall, however, endeavour to deviate from *his veracity*, and to detail truths only, adding a few impartial remarks on his merit as a Performer.

One circumstance, of which he is not a little vain, is, that his mother is at present a domestic to Lord THURLOW. He often boasts of this in company, though we do not find any similarity between him and the late Chancellor, excepting that they both venerate the bottle.

Mr. DAVIES was bred to the business of a *Stone Mason*, and indeed his stiff deportment makes him resemble a statue. An early acquaintance with
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the Dramatic Poets, and a tolerable voice, first seduced him to the Stage. But his was not an intimacy with the writings of Authors, as may perhaps be imagined—he only assisted in fixing up their busts, and knew *Shakespeare* better by his beard and piqued chin than he did by the energy of his language, or the grandeur and brilliancy of his ideas.

But emulous of entering the service of *Apollo*, he discarded his stones to qualify himself for a vocal performer.

His first Dramatic essays were in the country, at Norwich, Portsmouth, &c. and he had acquired some reputation as a Provincial Singer, when he obtained an engagement at Drury-Lane. The part he chose for his *debut* was *Lord Aimworth*; but though his vocal powers were favourably received, he accepted with cheerfulness every Character that was offered to him; and he soon became the most universal, if not the most eminent Actor at that Theatre.

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He had not established himself long as an *useful man*, before he imagined there were greater advantages to be derived from a situation in Covent-Garden house, and articted himself to the Proprietors of it accordingly. He has been there, as well as at the Hay-market, a great number of years, during which time his life has been a continual scene of the dissipations of the town, details of which we cannot suppose would be acceptable here.

Whatever his salary may be, he certainly deserves it; no member of any Theatre supports a more variegated list of characters, or more frequently appears before the Public. In Tragedy, Comedy, Opera, Farce, or Pantomime, he is always the Pack-horse of the evening, and it is very rare indeed that he is left out of a Piece. His person and countenance are genteel, and well adapted for the Stage; but he is extremely stiff and inanimate in his deportment; he is a tolerable singer, and a very articulate correct speaker; but his chief merit is extraordinary industry.

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Mr.

Mr. CUBITT.

IT will surprise those who are not previously acquainted with the circumstance, to hear that this Gentleman was first introduced to public life as a Singer, a line which he never now attempts. But it is still more surprising that, a few years ago, he should have been the principal Singer at Vauxhall Gardens.

He exerted his vocal powers not only at Vauxhall but also in Dublin, where he was received with a slight degree of favour. But he soon found that they were insufficient to secure him permanent applause, or a permanent engagement; and having obtained a situation in Covent-Garden Theatre, about five or six years ago, he did all in his power to make himself useful as an Actor rather than eminent as a Singer, and he has succeeded; for few Performers assume a more motley cast of parts, though none of them were
ever

ever designed to stand very forward upon the canvas. He has now entirely declined the musical line, and he has some merit in Comedy. The character which he personates with most excellence is *Gibbet*, in the *Beaux Strata-gem*, which he *looks* so completely, that it is impossible to mistake him for any thing but a Highwayman.

Mrs. MOUNTAIN.

THIS Lady, from her infancy, has been taught to revere the Stage as the most honourable and agreeable of all professions. Born to a public life, and that rather of a contemptible kind, she must now find herself extremely happy in being on a respectable footing in a Royal Theatre.

She is younger sister to Mr. WILKINSON, the famous *wire-dancer*, who, we believe, is very well known all over the three kingdoms. In her infancy there was no prospect of any provision for her, excepting what she could procure by her talents as a public Performer; and as her relations were not in such circumstances as to enable them to perfect her in those accomplishments necessary for an Actress, she was glad to article herself as an apprentice at the Royal Circus, having previously experienced great indigence.

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In this situation her beauty attracted the attention of the Proprietors of that place, and her vocal abilities and appearance the approbation of the auditors. She was rather negligent in her person, but still she was distinguished from her young sisterhood, and generally a favourite. When the term of her articles expired, ambitious of a more elevated station, she obtained permission to perform a few nights at the Haymarket Theatre, but her ill success obliged her to apply for an engagement with Mr. WILKINSON, Manager of the York Company, whom, it should be observed, is no relation to our heroine.

Placed in a Theatre-Royal, and engaged in regular Dramas, she applied to the study of the profession, not only with assiduity, but delight. She had some vivacity, which, decorated by great beauty, and considerable merit as a Singer, rendered her an uncommon favourite in Yorkshire:—she performed in almost every line of acting; and as she generally acquitted

herself tolerably, the country folks were so blinded by her pretty looks, that they gave her the name of a charming and very general Player.

After serving a few seasons under Mr. WILKINSON, her fame had acquired such strength as to reach London; and Mr. HARRIS, who catches even at the shadow of merit, engaged her for Covent-Garden. Previous to her *debut*, which was in the end of the year 1786, the newspapers teemed with panegyrics on her abilities; she was said to unite the abilities of Mrs. JORDAN and Mrs. BILLINGTON, and even to excell both; but those *Puffs* only tended to lessen her in the public opinion, when she actually came forward.

The musical, the serious, and the comic lines, she tried, but with little success; and towards the conclusion of the season she dropped into her proper sphere, that of a second Singer. About the same time too the heart of Mr. MOUNTAIN, a Musician belonging to the Band, beat so much in harmony with her own, that previous to the
shutting

shutting of the Theatre for the season, they were by holy wedlock made one.

Owing to some dispute about her salary she was, at the conclusion of last season, discharged, and we believe she is now engaged by Mrs. ESTEN for the Edinburgh Theatre, where her Husband is to lead the Band. The misunderstanding arose from Mrs. MOUNTAIN demanding her salary while in child-bed; but, on the score of her incapacity for duty, it was refused.

As a Performer Mrs. MOUNTAIN can only be considered useful; she has a pretty voice, and a pretty manner of singing; and, what is perhaps a still greater recommendation, she has a very pretty face. In Operas her manner is simple and agreeable, and for the department she filled we know none better calculated.

Mrs.

Mr. MACKLIN.

ALTHOUGH this Gentleman has not performed for several seasons past, yet the long time he has flourished on the Stage, the difficulties he has surmounted, and his known science in the art of Acting, fully entitle him to our notice. It must not, however, be expected, that an exact account of his life can be inserted here. Prominent features can only be sketched; and a few circumstances related that are not generally known.

He was born in a northern province of Ireland, and is descended from a very respectable family, which suffered from its attachment to the unfortunate House of STUART. His father was ruined by taking an active part in favour of James II. in whose service he commanded a troop of horse, of his own raising: and after the battle of the Boyne, which was fought in 1690, his son, the subject of the present biographical

biographical memoir, who was then two months old, was secretly conveyed to the house of a relation, in a distant part of the country, for greater security. In the fate of James was involved that of his misguided, but loyal and affectionate adherents; amongst whom one of the most conspicuous was MACKLIN's father; after whose death, his mother, a well-informed and sensible woman, placed him under the care of a Mr. NICHOLSON, a Gentleman of Scotland, who kept a reputable School in Dublin; and was thence removed to the family of a respectable Gentleman, a relation, in London, in order to be qualified for the mercantile line, for which his mother intended him, who, to render his education complete, purposed to finish it by sending him to a considerable house in Spain.

Such was his real origin, and such the plans formed for his future situation in life; from which the reader will perceive that there is no foundation for the numerous and contradictory reports

ports that have been circulated respecting his infant and boyish state.

The fond cares and views of his excellent mother were, however, counteracted by his passion for the Stage; his success, on which demonstrates, that he had not mistaken his forte, and that, in indulging this bias, he acted agreeably to the true impulse of Nature.

By the strength of his own natural powers and sound judgment, he was soon distinguished in the capitals of both kingdoms, as a Performer of great merit, particularly in *Shylock*, in *The Merchant of Venice*; which occasioned a Gentleman to write the following couplet on seeing him in that part:

“ This is the Jew

“ That SHAKESPEARE drew.”

In the year 1753, the conduct of Mr. FLEETWOOD, the Patentee of Drury-Lane, where Mr. MACKLIN was engaged, gave great offence to the whole Company. He was extremely dissipated, addicted to gaming, distressed for money,

money, and neglected the payment of the Performers salaries. This produced many remonstrances, which were all received with great condescension by the Manager, who reproached himself, and promised that their grievances should be redressed, but he never kept his word; until at last the patience of the Company being exhausted, and their necessities growing very pressing, at the end of the Summer they concerted a plan of doing justice to themselves, and upwards of a dozen, with MACKLIN, GARRICK, Mrs. CLIVE, and Mrs. PRITCHARD, at their head, signed an agreement, obliging each to accede to no terms without including all the subscribers.

They were in hopes that the Lord Chamberlain would grant them permission to perform at the Opera House, but they were disappointed; and Mr. FLEETWOOD, resolving to make them suffer, engaged other Actors from the country to supply their loss. The associated seceders, now finding their scheme unsuccessful, became anxious
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of re-obtaining their former situations, which they did, MACKLIN excepted, against whom the Manager had a private dislike, and whom his colleagues ungenerously abandoned.

Mr. GARRICK was warmly upbraided for his apostacy by the deserted Chief; but he excused himself by observing, that so many persons could not exist without emolument, and that he was willing to allow Mr. MACKLIN part of his salary, until he might be reconciled to the Manager, or procure another situation; but this offer was rejected with contempt; and a paper war was commenced, in which the injured party had certainly the advantage. On Mr. GARRICK's first appearance, the friends of MACKLIN, who were very numerous, determined to hiss him off the Stage; but the Manager being aware of this, hired a banditti for his support; accordingly, when *Roscius* came on, nothing but Off! Off! &c. could be heard. This scene of uproar continued two nights; but on the third, Mr. MACKLIN's party

ty being tired, and the Public desirous of seeing GARRICK perform, the controversy was dropped.

When Mr. LACEY succeeded Mr. FLEETWOOD, as Manager, MACKLIN was engaged again; and in 1746 he produced his Tragedy of *King Henry the VII.* and the following year a Farce, called *The Suspicious Husband*, criticised. These pieces added the reputation of an Author to that of a Player.

These and other dramatic pieces, which were favourably received, made him persevere in writing, and about 1760, he offered his excellent Farce of *Love-a-la-Mode*, of which the Actors had so bad an opinion, that some of them refused parts in it.

But the Author was not discouraged, and presided at the rehearsals himself. He intended at first to have performed *Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan*, but being unable to find a good Scotchman, he took *Sir Archy Macsarcasm*, and gave the Irishman to MOODY.

The satire on some Caledonian Gentlemen, contained in this piece, excited

great indignation on part of the natives of that country, while others laughed heartily at their folly. Some opposition was given to it, and vengeance was threatened to be taken on the author. The noise it made, excited much curiosity in GEORGE II. (who before this time had declined visiting the Theatres) to hear it read; but it was sadly bungled by an old Hanoverian Officer, who spent eleven weeks in misrepresenting the Author's meaning. The King, however, was highly satisfied at the Irishman's getting the better of his rivals.

Love-a la-Mode, has great merit. There is moral, plot, satire, and great strength of character contained in it; and it unquestionably is the best of MACKLIN's productions. The North Britons, who were so enraged at its first appearance, are now so pleased with it, that this Farce is one of the greatest favourites in Edinburgh; but they have not been able to reconcile their minds to *The Man of the World*, a Play since written by the same
Author,

Author, but pregnant with more satire on the inhabitants of Scotland..

Mr. MACKLIN's austere and unaccommodating temper, a few years after this, led him into a most disagreeable predicament. During the representation of *Love for Love*, at Covent-Garden Theatre, in which he and Mr. HALLAM, (uncle to Mrs. MATTOCKS) performed, they quarrelled about a wig in the dressing-room, each insisting to wear it. High words arose, and MACKLIN having threatened to knock the other down with his cane, without effect made a blow, by which the small end of the stick ran into HALLAM's eye, and entering his brain, he instantly went raving mad, and soon after died. MACKLIN took his trial for this, and was found guilty of manslaughter.

About this time he brought his daughter on the Stage, who was a young Lady of great accomplishments, and a favourite Actress; but being unable to submit herself to his temper, she would not live with him. She has been dead some years.

In 1773, after an absence of a few years from the London Stage, he returned to Covent-Garden, and announced his intention of performing *Macbeth* in an entire new manner, with great improvements in scenery and dresses. This part had long been one of the most eminent in which GARRICK appeared ; and as it is well known that he was extremely jealous of rivalry, it was suspected that he secretly encouraged a party to go and embarrass MACKLIN; for on the first night, a Lady of Mr. MACKLIN's acquaintance, who was in the Two Shilling Gallery with some friends, accused SPARKS and REDDISH, belonging to Drury-Lane, of hissing ; and from her report, Mr. MACKLIN likewise accused them on the Public Stage, previous to his appearing in *Macbeth* a second time, for which he was warmly applauded by the audience.

Alarmed at this, Mr. REDDISH immediately made oath before a Magistrate of his innocence, which was corroborated by the testimony of SPARKS, who

who acknowledged that he himself had expressed disapprobation, but that the allegations against his companion were false, and intended to deprive him of his livelihood, by incensing the Public against him. A paper war was commenced, in which Mr. GARRICK's friends took part against MACKLIN; and the oath had such weight with the town, when strongly represented by the opponents of the new *Macbeth*, that the popular opinion was quite changed, and he was driven from the Stage.

This was certainly a malignant conspiracy, nor was the Public, perhaps, ever more mistaken in any of its decisions; Mr. MACKLIN's designs were laudable; and although all his alterations were not successful, yet the majority of them are now adopted, and are confessedly judicious. However badly he might have performed the part, it cannot be supposed he would be less excellent than many who have been commended in the same character: but indeed it is perfectly evident that the opposition proceeded from the envy of

his competitors. This fracas was one of the most violent ever known in a Theatre. MACKLIN recovered judgment against several of the conspirators, in the Court of King's Bench. Time, however, blew the storm by; but he scarcely has performed any other characters since, except those of *Sbylock*, *The Man of the World*, and *Sir Archy Macsarcasm*. In the Season of 1788, his memory was very bad, and he so deaf, as not properly to hear the Prompter, which obliged him to apologize to the audience in the best scenes of SHAKESPEARE'S *Jew*, and he has never since appeared on the boards. His great age, (being upwards of an hundred) makes the Public look upon him with veneration. He is the first Actor that ever reduced the profession to a science, and he is very much celebrated for his skill in instructing Theatrical candidates.

By his want of œconomy it has lately been discovered that his pecuniary affairs are at a very low ebb. There is a subscription on foot for reprinting his

his works in an elegant manner, and for providing a genteel annuity for him out of the profits; for the success of which every one must earnestly wish, and surely no Theatrical Performer is more entitled to the public patronage.

Mrs.

Mrs. W E B B,

IF not the most charming Actress, yet certainly the most conspicuous woman on 'the Stage. She was born in Norwich, and early initiated in Theatrical mysteries; but to enumerate the Companies she has performed in would be to enumerate nine-tenths of the Companies in the three kingdoms.

Her maiden name was CHILD. She married Mr. DAY, and was in the Norwich Company thirty years ago. After the death of her first husband, she conceived a fondness for Mr. JACKSON, a Comedian well known in Bath and Bristol, and lived with him many years.

The flattery of our predominant passions is sure to be followed by affection, which apposite tastes more firmly rivet. Mrs. DAY was such an admirer of *Heliogabalus*, that she studied the different ways of cooking animal food, with more satisfaction than she studied

studied SHAKESPEARE or CONGREVE; and such was her proficiency in dressing a beef-steak, that the late Mr. WEBB felt her culinary preparations go to his heart:—he praised her ingenuity in pleasing the palate, she was delighted with the compliment, and, equally fond of pleasing—their sympathy of sentiment induced them to marry.

A more jolly couple than Mr. and Mrs. WEBB never trod the Stage—their appearance was not at all calculated to excite compassion, and make a lucrative Benefit in a country town; they had, however, a good income from the Edinburgh Theatre, which enabled them to indulge in their favourite passion.

Mr. WEBB performed in London ten or twelve years ago, without that *eclat* necessary to ensure a permanent engagement.

The first part that impressed the Manager with a favourable opinion of Mrs. WEBB's talents was *Mrs. Kitchen*, a character in some small temporary
piece

piece of Mr. COLMAN's, which was performed at the Haymarket; and a character which it may be supposed she was well acquainted with. *Mrs. Cheshire*, in the *Agreeable Surprise*, next brought her forward.—She was engaged at Covent-Garden, and in such parts as *Lady Dove*, the *Duenna*, *Lady Lambert*, &c. she stands alone, unrivalled by any competitor. Her voice is remarkably strong and clear, and her enunciation perfectly correct—indeed she is allowed to be one of the best speakers on the Stage. She was formerly a celebrated Singer in the country, and still evinces musical ability; but what has gained her most reputation is her figure, which is uncommonly lusty and grotesque—yet she is extremely vain of her beauty.

The expence of a plenteous table forced Mr. WEBB into the King's-Bench, where he died a few years ago.

Miss WEBB, this Lady's daughter, has lately acquired considerable laurels as a Singer in the country. She at present leads the Opera in the fashionable town.

town of Bath, which is the last step towards London. Her personal accomplishments, her powers of voice, her taste and execution, are highly spoken of, and with a good Master, and assiduity, it is expected she will soon be a distinguished favourite among our vocal Performers.

Before we leave this stately dame, Mrs. WEBB, we cannot help relating, that one evening, entering the *Green Room* very warm, wiping her face with a pocket-handkerchief, she suddenly exclaimed, “C——st F——s, my handkerchief smells of oil!” — “No wonder, Madam,” replied Mrs. MATTOCKS, “you’ve just wiped your face with it.”

Mr.

Mr. QUICK.

MR. QUICK is a native of London, where his father was many years a capital Brewer. But whether accident or inclination introduced him into Theatric life, is to us unknown. Before it is probable that *Reason* could have any share in his choice, we find him, when almost a child, figuring in the Company of a Mr. CARR, of whose rank and respectability the reader may judge, by being informed, that the principal places at which they performed, were Deptford, Hackney, and other small towns in the environs of the metropolis.

In this humble troop, C. BANNISTER, and others of equal merit, made their first appearance.

The parts to which Mr. QUICK attached himself, were those of sprightly Comedy, in which he discovered so much vivacity, that an engagement was very soon offered him at the Hay-market

market by Mr. FOOTE. There, however, he remained a long time in obscurity, without any chance of shewing his abilities, till called forth by accident. Chance is frequently the friend of Genius, when Genius has no other; and though she hath nothing to bestow but opportunity, that often becomes the best means of promotion, by introducing her to the most liberal of all patrons, *the Public*—and thus she befriended QUICK.

The late Mr. SHUTER, of laughing memory, being by the levity of his disposition involved in numerous embarrassments, was offered a second Benefit at Covent Garden, at the conclusion of the Season; and Mr. MACKLIN, from a wish to serve a brother in distress, proffered his services in *Sir Archy M'Sarcasm*; but the Piece could not be performed for want of a *Mordecai*.—SHUTER, who possessed the faculty of discovering genius, as well as displaying it, obviated the difficulty by chusing QUICK for the representative of the *Jew Beau*, in which he did ho-

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nour to SHUTER's judgment; for he acquitted himself so well, that with the recommendation of WOODWARD, who was his particular friend, he was immediately engaged at Covent-Garden.

With such an introduction, it was natural to expect that his talents would be frequently called into action, and that consequently his fame and his emoluments would greatly encrease; but in this very reasonable expectation he was unfortunately disappointed. Several seasons elapsed without the least opportunity of trying further those powers which had received such flattering eulogiums in *Beau Mordecai*; and so much was he disgusted with the *dumb attendants* given him to personate, and the smallness of his salary, that he was often on the point of quitting London, and joining some country Company, where, if he received no greater income, he would have had the satisfaction of representing the principal characters.

In the summer he was engaged for Portsmouth by Mr. YOUNGER, who
was

was then Manager of that Theatre, as well as Prompter at Covent-Garden. In Portsmouth, QUICK had greater scope for his abilities, which he displayed to such advantage as to procure the favour of the whole town, and the friendship of the Manager.

Mr. YOUNGER was universally esteemed for his philanthropy, of which a very considerable part of the present Performers now in London have felt the generous effects. No Manager of a Theatre was more ready, and even solicitous to do services. That gentleman saw QUICK's merit, and encouraged him to have patience; and when the *Padlock* was ordered to be got up at Covent-Garden, he gave him the part of *Mungo*:—this QUICK at first declined, from a fear of attempting it after DIBDIN, who had very happily succeeded in it; but Mr. YOUNGER insisting on his representing it, QUICK consented to personate the *sable Hero*; and how much he is the hero of the piece, every one knows who has seen him perform it.

He was now recognized by the Public as an Actor of great humour, and gradually advanced in his profession; but the part which crowned him with the greatest *eclat*, and at once stamped him an Actor of the very first class, was that of *Isaac*, in the *Duenna*, a part which he pourtrays with such whim and justness of character, that it becomes, in his hands, the most entertaining in that charming Opera.

At one time Mr. QUICK had a share in the Bristol Theatre, where he performed with uncommon success; and there he married his present wife, who is the daughter of a respectable Clergyman of that city; but Liverpool, of late years, has proved the most profitable to him in his Summer excursions.

Mr. QUICK lately attempted the arduous character of *Richard*. — On what ground he assumed it, we cannot say; if to put money in his pocket, it was an admirable Benefit Scheme. — The Piece went off with applause (as might be expected) from so great a favourite of the Public coming forward
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in so novel a situation ; and if laughing and good-humour are to be admitted a proof of approbation, even GARRICK's fame would, in this instance, give way to that of QUICK.

Few men are more respected in private life, and none on the Stage bear a more amiable character, than Mr. QUICK ; he associates occasionally with his brother Performers, but without entering into their excesses ; and as he is naturally of a benevolent, inoffensive disposition, he has the good word of every one. He lives much within his income, and must be worth money : indeed his general conduct approaches nearer to that of a tradesman than of a Dramatic Performer.

Mrs. BERNARD.

IT should be the most pleasing part of Biographical employment to place the merits of Characters in that point of view, which reflects the justest light on their actions. Under the influence of the propriety of this measure, we are happy in having found, in these degenerate days, even in a Theatre, a matrimonial fair-one whose public conduct demands encouragement, whose private, inculcates the lesson of example. In the various companies she has been a Member of, we have never heard that the slightest impropriety was laid to her charge.

The family or the place of nativity of this lady we cannot exactly ascertain. As Miss ROBERTS, she for some time sustained the station of heroine in several country Companies, and was in the Norwich Corps when Mr. BERNARD was smitten with her charms. Being both young adventurers, a sympathy

pathy of situation produced a fondness, which was not a little heightened by the circumstance of their being the greatest public favourites in the Company, she in Tragedy and Comedy, and Mr. BERNARD in Opera. They passed a short time in sounding each other's inclinations, which on finding mutually inclined for matrimony, they entered into that holy state.

From Norwich Mrs. BERNARD went to the West of England, where she acquired great celebrity as a Tragedian. Mr. PALMER, the Bath Manager, heard of her merit, and went to Weymouth purposely to see her:—he requested that she might perform two or three principal characters, and was so much pleased with her exertions, that he offered her her own terms; but her engagement not being expired, she was under the necessity of delaying a definitive settlement for several months.

Her husband was likewise engaged for Bath, though principally on her account. With the gay refined audi-
tors

tors of that city, she instantly became a favourite, particularly in Tragedy ; and great as the disparity now appears, she was the actual successor of Mrs. SIDDONS ; a circumstance that probably induced her to fix on *Lady Randolph* for her *debut* to a London Audience in 1787 : but a little reflection convinced her of the impropriety of such a step ; and though her name was announced at the bottom of the play-bills for *Douglas's Mother*, yet she afterwards thought it more prudent to come forward as *Mrs. Sullen*, in the *Beaux Stratagem*.

Mr. BERNARD performed *Archer* on the same evening, and though neither of them astonished the town with rare powers, yet both were approved of as respectable Comedians. Mr. BERNARD held a tolerable rank in the Theatre, to which indeed his abilities entitled him ; but from some strange perversion of talents, his wife was excluded from almost every part in which she might display her merit. With qualifications that might enable her to rank above mediocrity, she was made merely

ly useful, and parts the most opposite to her talents she was obliged to represent ; yet even in personating such trifling Characters as *Charlotte* in *Lova-la-Mode*, and *Amelia* in *Othello*, she convinced the Public of her claims to favour, and obtained considerable applause.

This Lady quitted Covent Garden, and went to Guernsey with her husband; where her talents, no doubt, are brought more into play, and consequently much more applauded.

Mr.

Mr. FENNEL.

THIS Gentleman is among the few who have descended from genteel prospects to the Stage, purely from inclination. Without the stimulus of necessity, and in danger of offending very respectable relations, he was impelled, as it were by instinct, to attempt the Buskin, and made application to the Managers without the forms of introduction, or the impediment of fear.

Mr. FENNEL can boast of more respectable connexions than the generality of the children of Thespis. He was born, if we mistake not, in Wales, where his relations now are, who gave him a liberal education, and intended him for the Bar. He came to London for accomplishment in the Law, but his attention was diverted from that pursuit, by a predilection for the Drama. Anxious to try how far Nature had qualified him for a profession for
which

which he felt such fondness, and at the same time anxious to conceal his passion from his friends, he thought in so remote a place as Edinburgh his attempt, if unsuccessful, would be buried in oblivion.

Thither he went in the Summer of 1787, and taking a lodging near the Theatre, he soon betrayed his errand to some of the Corps who inhabited the same house, by spouting in his apartment; but he communed with none of them. Mr. JACKSON, the Manager, was personally applied to, and our Hero performed *Jaffier*, *Othello*, &c. under the assumed name of CAMBRAY.

The flattering reception he met with here, induced him to hope for general approbation in London. He waited on Mr. HARRIS, about the opening of Covent-Garden Theatre, 1787, without any introduction, and coming to the point at once, told him he wished to become an Actor. Mr. HARRIS replied, that there were many possessed with the same desire, but few with the necessary

necessary qualifications. Upon which Mr. FENNEL begged leave to put it in his power to judge, and immediately repeated two or three speeches so much to the satisfaction of his auditor, that a night was instantly settled for him to make his *debut*.

Either from a desire of concealing his countenance, or a partiality for the part, he selected *Othello* for his *entrée*, and the encouragement given to his first efforts, emboldened him to drop the sable mask, and come forward as *Jaffier, Alexander the Great, &c.* but still under the fictitious name of CAMBRAY. In all these characters he was kindly received, and looked on as a very promising Theatrical Candidate. But as his talents did not create the admiration he wished and expected, he thought it adviseable to practise in the country, until his powers were nearer maturity.

The favour with which his exertions had been honoured in Edinburgh, pointed out that City as the most genial school for his instruction; but

but he had scarcely renewed his former estimation before he was driven from that Stage, in the most arbitrary, unjust, and ungenerous manner.

The Play of *Venice Preserved* was to be performed, and Mr. Woods, who has been the Scotch *Roscius* for about twenty years, already chagrined at the reputation of Mr. FENNEL, was mortified and alarmed when the part of *Jaffier* was taken from him, and given to the latter, though this was done without any design of hurting him, but merely to cast the play as strongly as possible; and *Pierre*, a character of equal, if not superior consequence, was given him in exchange. — This was entirely the act of the Manager, for we believe FENNEL approved of the soldier as much as the lover.

Mr. Woods, who was originally a Printer, felt himself piqued and insulted by the change. As he professes to teach the Scotch how to speak English, and conducts himself with great propriety in private life, he is admitted into genteel circles, and commands

such influence, that no Manager dares play in Edinburgh without engaging him on his own terms. Elevated in his own ideas, he imagined an explanation with JACKSON would be derogating from his importance. He waited on several young Lawyers who had formerly been his pupils, represented his grievance in the strongest colours, and with the advantage of having auditors previously prepossessed in his favour. The audience in Edinburgh think themselves the most select and judicious in the world! The audience in London they call an indiscriminating mob. Such being their sentiments, they instantly caught fire at the idea of an *English cheeld* superseding their *ain clever callant*; and after calling a numerous meeting, they went to the Theatre in a body, resolved to vent their indignation on Mr. FENNEL.

Whenever he appeared, he was saluted with hissing; called on to answer how he dared take *Jaffier* from Mr. Woods; insulted, and loaded with the most opprobrious invectives. He
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endeavoured to explain, but on hearing a zealot stigmatise him in the most odious language, his feelings as a man were so put to the quick, that he replied, "*The person who says so is a villain!*" This assertion not being generally understood, gave general offence, and he was called on to make a submission more humiliating, if possible, than that formerly demanded of Mr. JAMES AICKIN; which he refused, and in consequence was forced to quit the Stage.

Though the arbitrary and illiberal body of Lawyers became his bitter enemies, yet the unprejudiced inhabitants of Edinburgh thought him shamefully injured. The story spread, not only through Scotland, but England and Ireland; it was universally talked of, and the irascible Caledonians were universally execrated. Every one felt for Mr. FENNEL, and wished to see his wrongs redressed.

Finding so many friends, and finding justice so much on his side, he brought an action against the ringleaders for

depriving him of his livelihood; but here he found himself in an awkward predicament. To the disgrace of the country, not one Advocate could be found to plead his cause, though it was well known to be a good one, until Mr. CHARLES HOPE and Mr. LEWIS GRANT stood forth his champions, rather than not rescue Scotland from the ignominy of being destitute of Advocates to plead the cause of an oppressed individual.

But, as *Sir Harry Wildair* says, "It is vain to contend with a man in his own profession;" for, after prosecuting the conspirators with all possible rigour near twelve months, he found himself as distant from redress as when he first began; and, as if it were to exonerate the friends to his cause from mortification at his ill success, he consented to apologize on the public Stage, and acknowledge himself in the wrong, though every one present knew he had not done wrong till that moment!

This

This action, which changed the public commiseration into contempt, we cannot account for: it was not from a view of emolument in Edinburgh, as he soon after left that City; and it could not be from a conviction of his error. He performed a few nights in York, and obtained another engagement at Covent-Garden in 1789, where he seldom performed, and was discharged at the end of the Season.

On the commencement of the following Season he thought to effect by his pen what he could not accomplish by his Dramatic talents; and to frighten the Managers into a compliance with his wishes, by scourging them in a periodical publication, entitled "*The Theatrical Guardian!*" He professed to redress all Theatrical grievances, and he spoke many strong and bitter truths; but he failed in his design; the publication was dropped; the Managers remain unreformed, and Mr. FENNEL disengaged from any of the London Theatres.

In his person he is very tall, and rather handsomely formed; his face,
Q 3 too,

too, is well adapted for the Drama, and his voice is powerful and melodious. His merit arises more from personal than mental endowments, for his eloquence, though lofty and sonorous, is neither varied nor judicious ; and his deportment is rather incumbered by the stateliness of his person, than rendered graceful by it.

Mrs.

Mrs. MERRY.

NOT less esteemed for her public talents than for the strict propriety of her conduct in private life, we enter on the Memoirs of this Lady with pleasure; conscious that her moral rectitude must prove an exception to the general opinion entertained of Players by the scrupulous or illiberal classes of society.

Her father was formerly in business, but the Drama had long floated in his imagination; and some trifling embarrassments in his affairs suggested to him the idea of converting his propensity for the *Buskin*, which he had hitherto considered as an amusement, to a means of procuring a livelihood, if not a fortune. He took his family with him, and went to * Norwich,

* He is now Manager of the Theatre Royal at Norwich, and some other country Theatres, where he meets with great success.

where

where he became a Theatrical favourite, and was soon after engaged for Bath, a situation of more emolument and respectability.

His success here was equally flattering, and to the reputation of a tolerable Actor, he added that of an *Author*; he shewed a neat turn of thought, which was happily evinced one day previously to his Benefit, when he was skaiting on a piece of ice near Bath, in the presence of many genteel personages, among whom was the Dutchess of DEVONSHIRE; being a proficient in the art, he cut his name on the ice, and was observed by the Dutchess, who exclaimed, "*Extremely easy!*" Mr. BRUNTON replied with great quickness, "*I wish I were as easy as your Grace.*" The generous fair-one took the hint, and when she reached home, sent a twenty pound note, as a present for a few tickets to his night.

For several years he had looked with a fond hope to the fame of his daughters, whom he intended to introduce on the Stage, and took great delight
and

and pains in their instruction, particularly the eldest, who is our present subject.

She made her *debut* in Bath in the beginning of the year 1785, as the *Grecian Daughter*; and previous to the Play, the following Address, written by Mr. MEYLER, was spoken by her father :

Sweet hope! for whom his anxious parent burns,
Lo! from his tour the travel'd heir returns,
With each accomplishment that Europe knows,
With all that Learning or her son, bestows ;
With Roman Wit and Grecian Wisdom fraught,
His mind has ev'ry letter'd Art been taught.

Now the fond father thinks his boy of age,
To take an active part in Life's vast stage;
And Britain's Senate ope's a ready door
To fill the seat his sire had fill'd before.
There, when some question of great moment
springs,
He'll rise,—then "Hear him! hear him!" loudly
rings ;

He speaks—th' enraptur'd listening throng admire
His voice, his argument, his genius, fire!
The fond old man, in pure extatic joy,
Blesses the gods that gave him such a boy!
But if insipid dullness guide his tongue,
With what sharp pangs his aged heart is wrung!—
Despair, and shame, and sorrow, make him rue
The hour he brought him to the public view.

And

And now what tears! what doubts, what joys
I feel!

When my first hope attempts her first appeal;
Attempts an arduous task—Euphrasia's woe—
Her parents' nurse—or deals the deadly blow!

Some sparks of genius—if I right presage,
You'll find in this young novice of the stage:
Else had not I, for all this earth affords,
Led her thus early on these dangerous boards.

If your applause give sanction to my aim,
And this night's effort promise future fame,
She shall proceed—but if some bar you find,
And that my *fondness* made my *judgment* blind,
Discern no voice, no feeling, she possess,
Nor fire that can the passions well express;
Then, then for ever, shall she quit this scene,
Be the plain housewife, not the Tragic Queen.

The ill-natured reports circulated by her opponents of a want of powers operated in her favour:—the Audience expected to see a *mawkish Girl*, but found a CIBBER. The applause was proportionate to the surprise; every mouth emitted her praise, and she performed several parts in Bath and Bristol, a *Phænomenon* in the theatrical hemisphere.

Conscious that talents may so sometimes waste their beauties in obscurity
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after the noise their novelty has created, Mr. BRUNTON was indefatigable in sounding her panegyric through the news-papers into the ear of London ; and as the furor for Tragedy, excited by Mrs. SIDDONS, had not then subsided, Mr. HARRIS engaged Miss BRUNTON, in hopes that she would be able to make a stand against the *Melpomene* of the other House.

This was no sooner known, than the Conductors of the diurnal publications, some with a laudable design of encouraging blushing merit, but perhaps more from a wish of humbling Mrs. SIDDONS, by raising a rival, began to praise Miss BRUNTON with indiscriminate eulogium:—voice, figure, face, elegance, judgment, pathos, expression, and every qualification she was said to possess ; insomuch that the public curiosity was greatly excited, and it was scarcely possible for her to equal expectation.

Anxious to avoid comparison, she chose *Horatia* in the *Roman Father*, for her *entrée* in the metropolis, and
she

she was received with the most liberal applause by a crowded theatre. In the fifth Act she exerted herself with great spirit and success.

But the part was only second in the Play. HENDERSON, who performed the *Roman Father*, with uncommon animation, rivetted the attention of all present, and in some degree injured the fame of our juvenile Candidate ; although she was universally acknowledged an excellent Actress, and, being so young, of great promise. During her first season she was very much followed ; and her attraction, though weakened by frequently performing, has never ceased.

Her person and countenance are not entirely adapted to Tragedy ; she is scarcely tall enough, and her features are not very expressive, but her voice is sonorous, flexible, and sweetly melodious ; her deportment is graceful, and her action nicely and judiciously adapted to the situation ; her enunciation is animated—she catches the fire of her Author, and is guided by a feeling heart. She certainly
stands

stands next to Mrs. SIDDONS in the train of *Melpomene*.

In a short Comedy, called *The Child of Nature*, where she performed the part of a simple innocent girl, she has recently discovered talents that entitle her to a place among the votaries of *Thalia*; and in parts of Sentimental Comedy, she certainly is unrivalled.

Several gentlemen have at different times solicited this lady's hand in the Temple of Hymen. But in the summer of 1791, she entered into the matrimonial state with Mr. Merry, the celebrated Author of the Poems which have appeared under the signature of DELLA CRUSCA, with whom we believe she enjoys perfect felicity, but not more than every Dramatic Amateur and virtuous Citizen must wish her. Whether it is, that Mr. Merry wishes to withdraw our Heroine from the Stage, or that she has differed upon some point with the Manager, she is not engaged for the present season. Her loss is too visible, not to be felt and regretted by the Public.

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Miss

Miss CHAPMAN.

AMONGST the liberal vocations, there is not one where the professors, particularly the female ones, are more subject to the general charge of dubiety of character than the Stage. Whether this arises from a course of irregularities that too often precede a commencement on the Theatre, the force of solicitation when on it, or the impressions left on their minds by the frequent personification of *loose* characters, is hard to determine; probably they may all assist, as we find the charge, with very few exceptions, not over malevolently founded. It becomes the biographer, however, to condemn with lenity, and to distinguish between the vicious by inclination, and the unfortunate.

Miss CHAPMAN is a native of America, from whence she was driven by the hostilities that broke out against Great Britain in 1775. Her father
lost

lost a tolerable property by the disturbances, and sent our Heroine when very young to live with a relation in Yorkshire, who considering her as a burthen on his family, secretly wished her away; but conscious of the odium he must incur by turning her loose on the world, he treated her with insupportable severity, in hopes that by obliging her to elope, he might preserve his conduct from reproach.

Such was the situation of Miss CHAPMAN (a situation too often the cause of female imprudence) when a strolling Company came to perform at the town where she resided. Among the Corps was a Mr. MORTON, who had not been long in the Thespian train, and who was sorely wounded by the elegance and beauty of our Heroine: he poured forth the most ardent vows of sincere affection, offered the most honourable terms; and Miss CHAPMAN, more from a wish to change her situation, than from a tender passion, married him.

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As Mr. MORTON's income was inadequate to the maintenance of a matrimonial establishment, his wife, as much from pecuniary motives as from inclination, immediately made her *debut* on the Stage. The reception she met with was highly pleasing, which was, however, more owing to her personal appearance than intellectual powers. She remained in a Theatrical life several years, until her husband's Dramatic furor was cooled by continual penury, and assisted by a few friends he was enabled to return to the place of his birth (Shrewsbury) where he entered into business.

His behaviour entirely changed with his situation ; and whether his kindred had poisoned his mind, or that she had out-lived his liking, he treated his wife with great inhumanity, and without any apparent cause : the necessaries of life he not only sometimes denied her, but severely *goaded* her *feelings* by offensive weapons. She frequently eloped from his house, but was always brought back, and treated with additional rigour.

Finding

Finding her husband's hostile disposition unalterable, she resolved effectually to leave him, and fled to Chester, where joining a Company of Comedians, she resumed her maiden name; and dreading that the vengeance of her *kind* spouse would follow her, she put herself under the protection of Mr. HODGKINSON, with whom she afterwards went to Cheltenham, where Counsellor D——s long solicited her love, but in vain.

In the Summer of 1788, she went to Margate, and as her talents were now greatly improved, she met with general admiration. Her fame reached London, and induced Mr. HARRIS to engage her for Covent-Garden, where she made her first appearance in *Yarico*, in the succeeding Autumn.

The tallness and elegance of her person, the soft plaintiveness of her voice, and the ease of her deportment, prepossessed the audience in her favour, although her musical powers were but indifferent. She discovered such a portion of feeling and expression as oc-

casioned the piece to run several nights: and in other characters she established the reputation of a promising Actress in the public opinion.

In pathetic scenes she certainly has considerable merit, although it has not been brought much into action of late; she may, however, be made of importance to the Manager, if made more familiar with the Town.

Mr.

MR. DARLEY.

A FINE voice is so strong a recommendation to a Theatrical Candidate, that all defects are overlooked ; and it alone, if united with a good ear and assiduity, is certain of bringing emolument and fame to its possessor. The coarse robust appearance of Mrs. KENNEDY, was entirely forgot when her powerful correct melody was heard ; and no man's person would disqualify him more from attempting the Stage, where every movement is so conspicuous, than Mr. DARLEY's, were it not that he is blessed with a clear, strong, ductile voice.

It was neither *Thalia*, nor *Melpomene*, but *Terpsichore*, that first bewitched him into a public life.—Bred a Buckle-maker in Birmingham, his ideas would probably never have soared beyond the sound of the *file* and *hammer*, had not his vocal powers acquired him great celebrity among his shop-

shop-mates and pot-companions. Stimulated by praise and inclination, he panted for the honour of being a public Singer; and with no other qualifications than his own natural pipe and a few lessons, he offered himself a Candidate for the favour of the town, at the Birmingham Vauxhall; but whether from a knowledge of his real occupation, the uncouthness of his appearance, or that he had not studied the art of Music, he was considered as a piece of *base metal*; and notwithstanding the universality of that article among his auditors, his *sounds* were not approved of.

He was not, however, discomfited by his unpropitious onset; no one could deny the excellence of his voice, and he hoped to refine his taste by practice. He therefore engaged himself in the Theatre, where though his exertions were not more applauded than they had been at Vauxhall, yet he was not obliged to come so singularly forward. In this last situation he was noticed by some of the London Performers,

formers, who recommended him about the year 1780, as a Chorus Singer to Covent-Garden.

In London he laboured many years in obscurity, until a slight familiarity with our best Singers, enabled him to display his natural powers without shocking the ears of musical Amateurs; occasional accidents brought him forward, particularly one evening, when "*Sweet Poll of Plymouth*" was loudly called for during the performance of the *Positive Man*; in Mrs. KENNEDY'S absence he came forward, and sung it with such *eclat*, as recommended him to the encouragement of the Managers and favour of the Public.

When Mr. C. BANNISTER succeeded RHEINOLD, and afterwards had returned to his old masters at Drury-Lane, DARLEY was the only Bass Singer left at Covent-Garden, and from necessity he was put into all the first-rate Characters; in which he acquitted himself with credit, and gradually ingratiated himself into the esteem of the audience, and he now holds a very respectable station among our Vocal Performers.

He

He is very corpulent, and his appearance strikes us rather with an idea of his being a Jolly Publican or Butcher, than an Actor. He has improved himself very much in musical execution, and has now acquired a tolerable shake, and taste in his cadences: indeed, were it not for the aukward vulgarity of his person, he would bid fair to rival C. BANNISTER in public estimation.

Whether it was that he had not such principal characters given to him as he thought by his talents he was intitled to, or that he disagreed with the Managers, for refusing him permission to sing at Vauxhall, during the Summer of 1791, he deserted Covent-Garden; but as his powers are of great use, if not of importance, the mutual interest of both parties soon reinstated him in his old situation.

Mr.

Mr. LEWIS.

IF we look into the London Theatres, we shall find, that the majority of eminent Actors and Actresses have sprung up to their present elevation from the lowest Strolling Companies, by the mere dint of merit and application.—Mrs. SIDDONS, Mrs. JORDAN, Miss FARREN, Mr. KING, KEMBLE, and many others, may be adduced as instances. They have all been in *Provincial Corps*, their talents lightly esteemed in infancy, and themselves frequently in the utmost distress.

Genius in the country Theatrical World does not often meet sudden reward, but is generally ripened by gradual encouragement. However excellent a Performer's latent powers may be, very few have displayed accomplishments above mediocrity in a first attempt; and although a London Audience is the most indulgent, yet they will not follow an Actor who is not possessed

possessed of very extraordinary abilities, and great professional accomplishments. The Managers are, therefore, obliged to put their noviciates on the shelf, and deprive them of the opportunities of the practice requisite for perfection; and although they may gradually improve, yet it is generally by some sudden burst of genius, that a Performer establishes a reputation in London.

The Gentleman before us is indebted to great natural talents, and a close application to improvement, for his present professional rank, which is deservedly in the first class.

The father of Mr. WILLIAM LEWIS, was son of the Dean of St. David's, and had served an apprenticeship to a Linen-Draper in London; but when WILLIAM was born, in March, 1746, his parents were at the head of a Travelling Company, in which he first made his appearance at Shrewsbury, and at a very early age. At this time he squinted, and spoke remarkably fast; two defects which time and care obviated

obviated. Soon after his *debut* his father and uncle purchased a Company of the late Mr. LOVE, at Newry, in Ireland; where our young hero had every opportunity and encouragement to unfold his powers, which promised well, from the vast flow of spirits and vivacity he discovered; but the death of his father throwing the management of the Company into the hands of a Mr. DAWSON, who seven months after married Mrs. LEWIS, he very suddenly experienced the frowns of fortune—for the whole Corps was disbanded.

The dawning excellence of Mr. WM. LEWIS had not, however, passed unnoticed; and when only fourteen years of age, he was engaged by Mr. DIGGES, for Edinburgh, where his performance of *Master Simple* to LOVE's *Falstaff*, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, strongly recommended him to the favour of the town. This Company, (in which were Mr. and Mrs. DAWSON, and Mr. LEWIS, brother to the father of our rising genius) proceeded from Edinburgh to Whitehaven, where he like-

wise gave great satisfaction in most of the parts which his youth permitted him to personate.

Mr. DAWSON soon after returned with his wife and son-in-law to Dublin, with a determination to attempt the capital at once. As no Act of Parliament prohibited his design, he fitted up a very elegant Theatre in Capel-Street, Dublin, where, principally by the abilities of young LEWIS, he accumulated a handsome sum, and became a formidable rival to the more established Theatres.

Mr. LEWIS had here a judicious and favourable audience, who admired the versatility of his talents, and the sprightliness of his humour; and whose warm approbation nourished and brought forward his powers, during a service of several years. He considered himself so perfectly enabled to cope with Ryder, at that time in the zenith of reputation in Dublin, that whatever advance of emolument or privilege the latter received, the other claimed as his right. The God
of

of Love at length thought proper to try those passions in a *real* amour, which had appeared so natural in *fiction*, and smote him to the heart with the beauties of a Miss LEESON, who had just arrived from England, under the tuition of Mr. MACKLIN. The Lady being equally pleased with the person and address of her Theatric Lover, they were afterwards married.

Soon after the *West-Indian* had made its appearance in London, Mr. DAWSON brought it forward with all possible expedition in Dublin, and gave the part of *Belcour* to the subject of these Memoirs, who pourtrayed the giddy amorous youth with great animation and humour. Mr. CUMBERLAND, the Author of the Comedy, while on a visit to his father in Ireland, went to see his bantling exhibited in Capel-S reet, and was so delighted with Mr. LEWIS, that he complimented him by saying, he was the VERY *Belcour* he had an idea of, when he wrote the piece. This Gentleman, on his return to

S 2 England,

England, recommended him strongly to the Managers of Covent Garden Theatre, where he was soon after engaged, and where his success proved him highly deserving the distinction he had met with.

During his first career in London, he was equally celebrated in Comedy and Tragedy, though his *forte* evidently lay in the former. About the year 1781, Mr. HULL, finding the employment of Manager extremely troublesome, resigned it, and Mr. HARRIS requested the late Mr. HEN-

DERSON to succeed him, upon whose refusal, he offered it to Mr. LEWIS, as the next in theatric rank, who accepted it.

In this capacity it is, perhaps, impossible not to incur some dislike among the performers, who regard his power with jealousy and envy; but his exertions for the public entertainment have been always crowned, as they justly deserve, with approbation.

No

No Actor possesses more ease and vivacity on the Stage than this Gentleman, or can better excite risibility. *Pert* or *outré* Comedy is his *chef-d'œuvre* ; though he has often appeared in serious and tragic characters with great credit, but has now judiciously given them up for his proper sphere, and to attend more closely to the business of the Theatre. In *Mercutio*, and the *Copper Captain*, he is unrivall'd ; and it is doubtful whether he was ever excelled in those parts, which he represents in such perfection, that the most fastidious Critic cannot point out a single error or defect. The sprightliness, spirit, and propriety of his manner, catch the attention, and fill the imagination of his audience with the genuine ideas of the Author. In *Ranger*, *Belcour*, *Tom* in the *Conscious Lovers*, and various other genteel, sprightly, or foppish parts, he is a distinguished favourite.

Mr. LEWIS, by the emoluments arising from his profession, not only

supports himself and family handsomely, but it is said, very wisely reserves a part of his income against future contingencies, or for the benefit of his young offspring.

Mrs.

Mrs. FAWCETT.

WE can only view this Lady as belonging to the London Theatre on account of her husband, already mentioned in this work; for upon what other ground than a piece of lumber, inseparably attached to him, can we consider Mrs FAWCETT, who many years ago, when her powers were in more vigour, failed in her attempts in this metropolis? Such lumber often proves an insurmountable bar between Managers and Performers; yet in the present instance we do not think it so totally useless as not to be rendered worth its price, although the business it is applied to should only be such as may be transacted by almost any Lady in the Theatre.

If Mrs. FAWCETT is now only a third or fourth-rate Actress in London, yet she generally has been the Heroine of the Provincial Corps to which she has belonged, and those Corps have been, for Provincial ones, the most reputable

putable. From this City, the place of her nativity, we first find her a conspicuous personage on the Edinburgh Stage about twenty years ago, where, as Miss MORE, she was received with applause in the first tragic walk. But a *penchant* arising between her and Mr. MILLS, then the EDWIN of Scotland, they eloped together, and like Mr. EDWIN, he left his wife and family behind him, who, however, soon consolated herself in the arms of a Mr. BLAND.

The Caledonians hold a breach of the marriage contract in such abhorrence, that, with all his popularity, Mr. MILLS was obliged to take refuge in England, where he and our present subject shone no inconsiderable luminaries in the Dramatic world. In 1783, by performing *Don Jerome* and *Skirmish*, for Mrs. WEBB's Benefit, he displayed so much merit, as induced the Managers of Covent-Garden to give him an engagement, and Miss MORE at the same time made her *entrée* as *Imogen*, at Drury-Lane, under the name of Mrs. MILLS. She pleased, and was applauded, but it being evident that

that she could only render herself useful, and a Theatre being generally overstocked with persons of that description, she did not obtain a footing in Old Drury. Mr. MILLS soon afterwards disagreed with the Managers of Covent-Garden Theatre, and, with our Heroine, joined the York Company, where he, as a Comedian, and she as a Tragedian, were the most eminent of the Corps.

Mr. MILLS died in 1788, and Mr. FAWCETT being soon afterwards engaged by Mr. WILKINSON, was so strongly smitten with the charms of his mourning widow, that as soon as ceremony would permit, they were made one by holy wedlock. Mr. FAWCETT, when solicited to article himself at Covent-Garden Theatre, stipulated for an engagement to his wife, in consequence of which she made her *debut* last Season, and although she does not rank very forward upon the canvas, yet she possesses a degree of ability, which, in second or third-rate characters, may be found very useful in the Theatre.

Mr.

Mr. INCLEDON

POSSESSES the most powerful melodious pipe ever heard upon the Stage in modern times ; and although it is impossible to decide upon the extent of the natural abilities of Singers in former ages, yet we cannot believe them to have been superior to those of this Gentleman. As a tenor, his voice is not only always agreeable to the ear, but equal in compass to any piece of music ; the *falsetto* part is extensive and sweet beyond conception ; and the *bass* is better than could reasonably be expected in one gifted so liberally with the other two. He has profited by instructions from some of the best Masters ; and had the mode of his introduction to the London boards, and the scope given to his talents, been equal to his merit, he at his *debut* in Covent Garden Theatre would probably have attracted as great crowds

crowds as SIDDONS, JORDAN, or BILLINGTON.

Mr. INCLEDON is a native of some *Rotten Borough*, in Cornwall ; where his father was a respectable Physician. Whether from the inclination of our young Hero, or the numerous progeny of his Parent, and consequent difficulty of providing for them, Master CHARLES was, when only eight years old, articed to Mr. JACKSON, of Exeter ; whose musical compositions are so justly celebrated. Young INCLEDON's voice at a very early period excited admiration, and under such an excellent Tutor, we need not wonder if the rapid progress he made in the science rendered him a little idol in all the Concerts and Musical parties about the neighbourhood. But having gone through a tolerable musical education, he, at the end of six or seven years, felt the love of his country rise superior to every other consideration, and scorning APOLLO, when BRITANNIA was in danger, entered as a Midshipman on board the Formidable, A. D. 1779.

He

He went to the West Indies, and during the two years he continued in the Navy, was in several engagements, but whether during the whole of that period he was stationed in the Formidable we cannot say. His vocal powers were extremely agreeable to his Mess mates, and their reputation soon recommended him to the particular notice of the most eminent Noblemen and Gentlemen in the Fleet, with whom he became a very great favourite. With a view of putting him into the proper sphere, where his powers would be most serviceable to himself, he was persuaded to return to England, and to attempt the Stage. Lord Mulgrave, Admiral Pigot, and others, gave him letters to Mr. Colman, and he made application to our modern *TERENCE*, in the summer of 1782; but although his naval patrons had praised him to the skies, yet the Manager never complied with their request. Indeed that Gentleman, though so justly esteemed for his writings, has repeatedly confessed the deficiency

deficiency of his ear in Music ; and he never gave a stronger proof of it, than in the present instance, where he rejected a treasure of the greatest importance.

Determined, however, to attempt a profession, to which he had been so often advised, and in which he had for some time thought himself capable of succeeding, he joined Collins's Company at Southampton, where the sound of his voice had sufficient interest to procure him a situation. He made his *entrée* as *Alphonso* in the *Castle of Andalusia* ; and was received with the most flattering approbation. He had been about a year in this corps, and had experienced a large portion of the difficulties usually encountered by itinerant Players, when the fame of his abilities having reached Bath, he was engaged by the Managers in that city.

It was his musical powers alone that obtained him this engagement, for his abilities as an Actor were not much valued ; and the disappointments he had already met with, dis-

couraged him from displaying with the necessary confidence the acquirements he had made in the science of Music, under JACKSON. He was regarded as little better than a Chorus Singer, and obliged to personate the most trifling or disagreeable characters; but fortunately the penetration of the musical *amateurs* in that city, soon discovered his value. RAUZZINI, the conductor of the concerts, who as a teacher, a composer, or a man of exquisite taste, has few equals, one evening in a Song between the Acts perceived INCLEDON's great natural powers. and that he possessed a tolerable knowledge in Music; he immediately took him under his care, and gave him the best instructions a pupil could receive: he sang at the concerts in Bath and Bristol with great applause, was engaged at Vauxhall London in the summer, where his success was still more flattering, and RAUZZINI's patronage in a few months brought him from obscurity into universal estimation.

His presence was now courted by every company; he was the favourite
at

at the Noblemen's Catch-club in Bath, which he assisted in establishing; and Doctor HARRINGTON, the most eminent Physician there, a Gentleman of great musical genius, became his particular friend. By being under such a master as RAUZZINI six or seven years, he received a compleat musical education, and became, what he now is, the first English Singer on the Stage; yet it is extraordinary that during the whole of his stay in Bath, where he was almost worshipped by all ranks for his abilities, he never, even in his last season, was brought so forward on the Stage as might have been expected: perhaps this arose from the Manager's old system of preventing any Performer having too great a hold of the Public. Mr. WORDSWORTH, who made no great noise at Sadler's Wells last summer, occupied the first walk in Bath: and Mr. INCLEDON, who has made very great noise in Covent-Garden Theatre during these two years, was obliged to content himself with the second. But he felt himself every day improving

under RAUZZINI; and knowing that he must soon arrive to what he now is, he chearfully submitted to every mortification on the journey.

He made his *debut* as *Dermot* in *The Poor Soldier* on Covent-Garden Stage, in October 1790, and met with a very warm reception. But here it is necessary to remark, that having been often heard at Vauxhall, a place which has become proverbial for vulgar Songs and Singers, the public opinion was made up upon the extent of his talents in a Theatre; and the very circumstance of his being a *Vauxhall Singer*, was sufficient with the multitude, who have no judgment of their own, to make great success for him in the Drama a ridiculous expectation. But the voice which, in common with all others, was never listened to in Vauxhall Gardens, by persons of musical taste, had a very unexpected effect when confined within a Theatre; and it was now for the first time discovered by the town, that INCLEDON united with one of the finest voices ever heard, great science, pathos, taste

taste and execution. But whether from delicacy to JOHNSTONE, or a wish to prevent INCLEDON gaining too much on the public favour, the Managers gave him no first-rate characters ; they did not bring him so forward as his talents deserved, and for the fame he has acquired he is wholly indebted to the irresistible force of his own merit, which must make its way to reputation if he is at all heard. He has occasionally performed *Captain Macheath*, *Young Meadows*, &c. in so masterly a manner, as prove him to be fully, and almost singularly, calculated to take the lead in all Operas.

He assists with great *eclat* at the *Oratorios* in Lent ; and in the two last Summers he has performed in Ireland, where no Singer—not even Mrs. BILLINGTON, was ever more caressed. The extreme encouragement given to him in that kingdom, might justify him in adopting it as his principal scene of action.

We cannot help observing that Mr. INCLEDON has considerably changed

his stile of singing since he has been engaged in Covent - Garden Theatre. The *falsetto* part of his voice, if not altogether laid aside by him, is much less used than when he was on the Bath Stage, where its charms generally gave the highest delight. In the song of "*Bet sweet Blossom,*" he particularly charmed with it; and he has sometimes been obliged to sing that air three times in an evening—never less than twice. He seems to be now instructed to practise more in the tenor or middle part of his voice, which may perhaps be more agreeable to nice scientific ears, but far less to the multitude; for, in Music, like in Painting, a colouring of light and shade surprises and pleases by its boldness and variety.

Mr.

Mr. MACREADY.

WE very often see meekness and industry promoted, in preference to pride and genius. On the Stage, as in other professions, vanity offends those persons who are at the head of affairs, as much as humility pleases them; the former is sometimes an impediment, and the latter the means of accelerating advancement. The truth of this is instanced in the Memoirs of Mr. MACREADY; who probably would not have been entitled to a place in this Work, but for his condescending acquiescence to the humour of Mr. MACKLIN.

This Gentleman was bred to the business of an Upholsterer by his father, who carries on that trade to a very considerable extent in Dublin. A residence in that Capital, with frequent visits to the Theatre, are the principal circumstances to which we are to ascribe his changing the hammer

mer for the truncheon. But the particulars of his *penchant* for the Drama, as there is nothing remarkable in them, we shall omit.

His talents were not very brilliant—Tragedy was his favourite, and he maintained a respectable situation in Smock-Alley, which, however, proceeded as much from the public esteem of his private character and relations, as from his abilities as an Actor, which were very moderate, notwithstanding he had figured in many first-rate parts in Belfast, and other provincial towns in Ireland.

About five or six years ago, Mr. MACKLIN went to perform a few nights in Dublin, and the first of the Pieces he was anxious to appear in was his own *Man of the World*, which he was eager to have well got up. The character of *Egerton* was given to Mr. DALY, the Manager, who was instructed by the Author with great petulance. The defective memory of Mr. MACKLIN made him arrange the Stage business differently every day, and his haughty confidence

fidence made him superior to contradiction. Mr. DALY submitted to the old Veteran's caprice, in being directed like a school-boy, until the epithets blockhead, stupid fellow, no Actor, dunce, &c. &c. were bestowed with so much liberality on him, that he threw down the part with great indignation.

MACREADY was now selected to personate *Egerton*, and accommodated himself with so much deference to the will of MACKLIN, as induced the latter to predict in his favour. As he sustained the character very tolerably, and was applauded, his Tutor exulted in his triumph over the Manager, complimented MACREADY on his talents, and offered him a sum of money, which being refused, MACKLIN expressed his determination to do something for him, and promised he would exert all his interest for an engagement at Covent-Garden.

He gave MACREADY some trinkets of value, and, agreeable to his word, fixed him the following Season, on a genteel salary, with Mr. HARRIS. He
made

made his first appearance at Covent-Garden in 1786; and since that time he has represented what are called the second-rate *Walking Gentlemen*, with as much *eclat* as possibly can be derived from such insipid characters.

As Mr. MACREADY does not pretend to eminence in his profession, he averts strict criticism. His person is genteel, his deportment easy, his voice and articulation tolerably clear, and he is always attentive to his business; he sustains his allotted department with the requisite ability, and perfectly fulfills the Manager's views in engaging him.

Towards the conclusion of last Season this Gentleman produced an After-piece, called *The Irishman in London*, which was first brought forward for a Benefit, and succeeded so well that it was repeated four or five times. By this first essay, we hope Mr. MACREADY will be induced to make future attempts at Dramatic writing, as he has reason to expect considerable reputation in that line.

Mr.

Mr. MUNDEN.

THERE are some men who step at once to the utmost eminence to which their abilities can possibly raise them ; who having a good portion of shrewdness and judgment, without a spark of genius, collect from observation, and acquire by study, a tolerable degree of merit ; who arrive at their *ne plus ultra* at a time when others have not unfolded the powers of their mind ; who surprise at first, yet sink in esteem as expectation is disappointed of improvement. Mr. MUNDEN comes very near to this description ; for, if we except the part he performs in “ *The Road to Ruin*,” he has remained stationary in the public opinion, since his first appearance in London. At first his fame made a noise over the whole Town—now, the only noise of his abilities, is made by himself in the Theatre.

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It is no wonder, however, that *Goose* never flies at him, as he was once in the habit of daily massacring that favourite London Bird—it may therefore be expected to be silent when he appears: neither is it surprising that he who early in life had *wings* so much at command, should feel a confidence in soaring above the vulgar pursuits of the multitude; for before he had arrived to years of discretion, he had plundered the feathered tribe of twenty times the quantity of cloathing necessary to enable his Pegasus to overtake FAME in her swiftest flight; and emboldened by such a capital, he fluttered from the Poultry-shop of his Father, in Brooke's - Market, Holborn, and joined a covey of Comedians in the vicinity of the Metropolis.

But his first attempts either met not with due encouragement, or did not deserve any, for as a Child of THESPIs, no star befriended him, excepting his unconquerable hopes. During several years, he suffered all the penury that ambition could inflict; in proof
of

of which, from among many others, we select one instance. About twelve or fifteen years ago, after being Alexander the Great, Julius Cæsar, and the tyrant Richard, at Canterbury, Mr. SWORDS, formerly of the Summer Theatre, in the Haymarket, and Mr. MUNDEN, were obliged to take their passage from that city to London in a cart; and in the course of their journey, the former actually exclaimed, "Tap my eyes!—when you are at Covent-Garden, and I at Drury-Lane,—for you know, we will be too eminent to be both retained by one house—what will the Theatrical Biographers say, when they hear that the great BILLY SWORDS, and the great JOE MUNDEN, rode from Canterbury to London in a *Cart?*"

While in the southern parts of the kingdom, Mr. MUNDEN had little reason to be delighted with his new profession; it was the North which cherished and brought forward his abilities. The encouragement he received in Newcastle upon Tyne was of the

most gratifying nature, for he soon became there the most favourite Comedian—the Edwin of the Company; and in that Corps, which is not the least respectable in England, his great talents were considered to be rewarded with a singular liberality, when he was allowed a settled salary of fifteen shillings per week. It is however necessary to be known, that in Companies of such a complexion, salary, is but a secondary object. Mr. MUNDEN at that time, by Benefits annually in Chester, Whitehaven, Newcastle, &c. made his income amount to nearly the same sum it does at present, and in a few years, having laid by a large fortune—for a strolling player—he purchased a share in the Company, which had been in possession of Mr. AUSTIN.

He had long been an unrivalled favourite in the Provincial Theatres where he performed, and for several years he had been a Manager; when the death of Mr. EDWIN, in the Autumn of 1790, obliged the Proprietors
of

of Covent-Garden Theatre to ransack the country for a substitute. Mr. MUNDEN's reputation had made too much noise for him to escape notice, although, we believe, the eulogiums of Mr. CONST, Barrister at Law, who has a large property in Covent-Garden House, tended chiefly to induce Mr. HARRIS to engage our Hero the instant the final exit of the celebrated *Momus* was known; and Mr. MUNDEN made his *debut* towards the conclusion of the same year. He appeared in a variety of characters, such as *Jemmy Jumps*, *Sir Francis Gripe*, &c. &c. and was warmly received in them all:—indeed some people went so far as to assert, that he at least equalled, if he did not excel EDWIN; and the buzz of approbation, which was general, led those who cannot, or who dare not think for themselves, and who are always very numerous in a Theatre, to believe that the *Sock* had suffered no diminution of entertainment by the change.

But although Mr. MUNDEN's abilities are certainly entitled to commendation,

mendation, yet great was the falling-off between him and EDWIN; and after the never-failing passion for variety had subsided, the Town became perfectly sensible of the full extent of our Hero's talents. He retired to the place in the public estimation which he now holds, and was looked on as a good Low Comedian, although destitute of extraordinary genius, or of extraordinary powers in exciting risibility.

Mr. MUNDEN's acting never appears natural: he is always acting, and by too much anxiety to please he never allows the audience to forget that they are in a Theatre. In *Sheepsface*, *Mawworm*, or *Darby*, EDWIN delighted most when he seemed to labour at it least; his simplicity equalled every idea that could be formed of such characters by the most lively imagination; but there is a monotony in Mr. MUNDEN's voice, an invariable dry sameness in his manner, and an excess of acting, with an apparent confidence in his success, which must for ever preclude him from attaining the summit of reputation as a Low Comedian.

Mrs.

Mrs. P O P E.

THE Arts and Sciences may generally be compared to coy Mistresses; they must be often *congéed* to, solicited, and dangled after, before they grant the last indulgence: there are, however, exceptions in both cases; when the genius of the professor and the *je ne sçai quoi* of the lover bear down the stages of progression, and in the first attack prevail over the united efforts of application, time, and attention.

If we peculiarize this observation to the Stage, we find but very few Performers starting out at once into the meridian of applause. On the contrary, some of the most celebrated amongst the ancient and modern Players were obliged to time and observation for the cultivation of their talents; and indeed, when we consider the many mechanical requisites that are necessary to assist genius in this profession, why it should be otherwise is an object of admiration!

miration!—Some exceptions, however, have prevailed over this general rule.—GARRICK, POWELL, and HOLMAN, bore their blushing honours thick upon them on their first appearance. Mrs. POPP adds another exception.

Descended from a good family of the name of YOUNGE, who left her little beside her education, the Heroine of these pages had her situation in life to make at a period when most girls are occupied by no other ideas than their pleasure.

She had, in the course of her education, acquainted herself with the best English Dramatic writers. It was a style of reading she always relished so much, that she now began, seemingly, to think of putting it in practice; and procuring a letter of recommendation to Mr. GARRICK; that Gentleman was so pleased with her first essay, that he took the pains of attending her at several private rehearsals; when every trial gave fresh proofs of her abilities.

At the end of three months, (in the Winter of 1768) she came out in
Imogen,

Imogen, in *Cymbeline* ; a part, however, hazardous, from the variety of its difficulties; yet so strongly was she possessed of the spirit of the Author, and so powerfully assisted by her address, and other Stage accomplishments, that she obtained universal applause. Her next attempt was in *Zingis*, a new Tragedy brought out that Winter, by Mr. Dow. In this, though an inferior character, she renewed her applause with the Public; convinced them her acting was not the mere force of document, but of judgment and feeling; and, in short, was second to none but Mrs. BARRY.

From these proofs Miss YOUNGE's Theatrical merit was pretty well established, and she now shared most of the capital parts in Tragedy and Comedy, in all of which she acquitted herself with a judgment and spirit rarely the lot of an Actress of her standing. She was in this line of reputation, when the Managers of Smock-Alley Theatre, in Dublin, commissioned Mr. MACKLIN, who was then here as their Recruiting

cruiting Officer for that side of the water. This judicious Veteran instantly laid hold of her, and accordingly made her advantageous proposals. Though she saw them entirely in this light, she had generosity enough to give a preference to her own Manager, whose usual clear-sightedness was so much asleep on this occasion, as to let her go for the difference of thirty shillings per week advance, at a time when Mrs. BARRY scarcely had a support in Tragedy.

Miss YOUNGE having thus discharged every duty to her delicacy, arrived in Dublin in 1771, and instantly made a formidable head against the Manager of Crow-Street Theatre. The people of that capital, who are one of the most judicious audience in Europe, saw her merit, and rewarded it. Here she was encouraged to fathom the line of her abilities; and trying the several rounds of Comedy and Tragedy, was enabled, from experience, to weigh the force of her powers. Her engagement to Ireland being but for a season,

Roscus

Roscius in the mean time awoke from his dream of error, and making a virtue of necessity, he generously called her over to do justice to her abilities.

At Drury-Lane Theatre this admirable Actress continued until the year 1779. She then engaged with Mr. HARRIS, Patentee of the Theatre-Royal, Covent-Garden, from which she has since been absent but one Season.

In 1784, during a professional excursion in Ireland, she saw Mr. POPE perform at Cork, and approved so much of his powers, that she recommended him to Mr. HARRIS; and at Covent-Garden his success justified her opinion of his talents. A mutual affection arose from this circumstance, and in a season or two afterwards they were married.

Her merits as an Actress are too well known, after twenty years performance, to require in this place a minute investigation. In a wide range of characters in Tragedy and Comedy, and in the humorous as well as the fashionable walk of the latter, she has been uniformly

uniformly distinguished with applause. In her claims to *universality* she does not yield to Mr. GARRICK, and leaves at a great distance every Performer at present on the Stage.

Mr.

Mr. BLANCHARD.

THIS Gentleman is more extraordinary in his *private* character than in his *public* capacity; although his merit as an Actor entitles him to no inconsiderable share of commendation. Born and bred in a Theatre, where vice seldom receives a check, and where the fallibility of human nature is almost suffered without reproach to deviate from the paths of rectitude, he has evinced sentiments that would honour a Divine, and in him we see an instance of the possibility, that virtue may be nursed *even in the Green Room*.

The parents of Mr. BLANCHARD were many years ago employed in Drury-Lane Theatre, where their pecuniary emoluments were too small—to enable them to educate their son for any better profession than their own. He was accordingly taught dancing, and occasionally performed little parts, particularly *Prince Arthur* to GARRICK's
King

King John, which obtained the praise of the immortal *Roscus*; and in *Harlequin's Invasion*, where he discovered some infantine abilities.

As he advanced to maturity, he perceived that his talents were not likely to be called into action, in a place where only the most refined merit meets encouragement; he therefore very judiciously determined, for the sake of practice, to enter into a Country Company, and by that means accomplish himself for the nicer taste of a London audience.

At Plymouth and Exeter he found parts adapted to his talents, and became such a favourite of the Bath Managers, who are ever culling the choicest theatrical flowers in the West, that they engaged him. Here he found himself very happy; his unaffected simplicity, and native humour on the Stage, his affability and laudable conduct off it, rendering him at once, an esteemed and respectable Actor. He also distinguished himself as a Hornpipe-dancer.

There

There is a pleasing smile on his countenance, much more alluring *on*, than *off* the Stage, which is said to have made a warm impression on the heart of a young lady, then at a boarding-school in Bath, whose relations were not only people of fortune, but title. The wounded fair-one found means to obtain an interview, and by indirect hints sufficiently expressed her passion ; but whether Mr. BLANCHARD's affections were already engaged, or that he acted as the most rigid honour dictated, it is certain, that he thanked the young lady for her good opinion, but declined the flattering offer. The lady, who was very young, and whose name for obvious reasons we conceal, never afterwards communicated with him.

Though Mr. BLANCHARD declined this alliance, he was by no means prejudiced against matrimony. The charms of Miss WEWITZER induced him to promise her marriage; yet he soon after gave his hand to Miss WRIGHT, formerly of Drury-Lane Theatre,

Theatre, who it seems had suddenly rivetted his affections. This young lady had an amiable character, and a genteel salary as a singer, in the Bath Company, the latter of which her relations did not scruple to say was the object of our Hero's affection; but this illiberal assertion did not cool the mutual flame of the young couple; and to shew her parents the *disinterestedness* of his passion, he withdrew her from the Stage, soon after their marriage.

Mr. BLANCHARD had many offers from London, but refused them, until such liberal terms might be obtained as would enable him to keep his wife and an aged parent with comfort; and a salary adequate to his wishes was given him about the end of 1787.

It might reasonably have been imagined, that one who had passed all his life on the Stage, would not be terrified at the thoughts of appearing before a London audience:—the reverse was however the case with Mr. BLANCHARD. For a week previous to his *debut*, he was in the greatest agitation

of mind, and could rest neither night nor day. His fears communicating to his wife, whose nerves were of a more delicate texture, are said to have worked so much upon her feelings, that she actually became insane for a considerable time; a circumstance which, it may be supposed, contributed not a little to his own perturbation.

About the month of October, he made his *entrée* as *Hodge*, in *Love in a Village*; and performed *Sharp*, in the *Lying Valet*, in the Farce. His merit was so obvious that he received very flattering applause; and by his excellence in various other characters, particularly the *Plough Boy*, in the *Farmer*, he has improved on the public opinion, and is now a great favourite.

There is an arch slyness in his countenance, mixed with seeming goodness, which is peculiarly his own, and is extremely appropriate to several parts that he performs. He is likewise unrivalled in portraying rural simplicity, which is his true *forte*, although he sometimes appears in fop-

pish characters. His person is rather short and thick, but not disagreeably so; and as the current of popular opinion is in his favour, he will probably rise to considerable professional eminence.

Mrs. BLANCHARD has been engaged this season at Covent-Garden Theatre, where she has been employed chiefly as a substitute for Mrs. Martyr, while that Lady was in child-bed, and she has acquitted herself very respectably.

Mr.

Mr. HULL.

WHEN grey hairs are accompanied by virtues, they claim great respect: and when virtues are found in a Theatre, they claim encomium not only as their due, but as a punishment to those persons who have none, and who attempt to laugh all morality out of countenance:—indeed, morality is very unpopular *behind the curtain*.

What Mr. HULL's early pursuits in life were, we cannot precisely tell. He is one of the oldest Actors on the London Stage, and one of the most respectable men off it. Not content with guiding his own conduct by those principles that distinguish the man from the scoundrel, he has ever been ready to relieve the indigent, to patronize the friendless, and reprove with mildness the profligate.

A Theatrical Fund for the relief of distressed Actors and Actresses was long talked of, but never began, until

Mrs. HAMILTON, a once eminent Performer, was reduced to extreme poverty. This appeared a favourable crisis, and Mr. HULL, in conjunction with Mr. MATTOCKS, stepped boldly forward, called a meeting of the Performers, and addressed them on the expediency of making some provision for the sustenance of those who by age or misfortune might be reduced to want: the scheme succeeded, and it was agreed, that six-pence in the pound should be paid out of the weekly salaries, towards raising a Fund for that purpose. The same plan was adopted at Drury-Lane, where Mr. GARRICK performed annually for its benefit, and where there still is a night given to it every season. The only person who dissented from this laudable undertaking was Mr. and Mrs. YATES; and the shameless reason they assigned was, that they would never want its assistance.

The founding such an excellent institution, must perpetuate the philanthropy of Mr. HULL, who likewise
claims

claims an honourable rank among men of literature for the several Dramatic Pieces he has produced. They shew him at once a man of education, taste, and genius; and his Tragedy of *Henry the Second*, or *Fall of Rosamond*, will be a favourite Play when he is no more.

Soon after Mr. COLMAN relinquished the management of Covent-Garden Theatre, the better to attend to the Haymarket, which was his sole property, Mr. HULL was appointed to conduct the business in his stead, a situation which he filled three years with great credit, till finding it too laborious for his constitution, he resigned it, and Mr. W. LEWIS, the present Acting Manager, was chosen to be his successor.

Mr. HULL is now considerably advanced in years, yet he still officiates in the Theatre. His parts are confined to aged fathers, nor is he under the necessity of counterfeiting bodily debility. In such characters as *Priuli*, *Friar Lawrence*, *Sir John Flowerdale*, &c. he is precisely what they were designed

signed to be, tender, moral, and infirm. He performs at Birmingham every Summer, where he is a great favourite, and where he steps into the more arduous walks of the Drama.

Mr.

Mr. DUFFEY.

A Fondness for Theatrical exhibitions begets a propensity towards the Performers, and a desire of their company, among the middling ranks of mankind; which in a little time grows into a wish of attempting their profession, from a hope of a genteel income, and a profusion of public panegyric.

Mr. DUFFEY, who served a regular probation to the business of a Hatter, and who kept a shop in Dublin, was highly pleased with the society of the histrionic Gentlemen in that city ; and as he sung a good song, and heard his voice often complimented, he soon looked down with contempt on his mechanical maintenance, and felt his breast burn only for the soothing service of APOLLO.

The report of his natural talents opened the way for his introduction to the Theatre ; and his reception by the Public was such as he had great reason
to

to be pleased with. His voice was highly commended ; but study and private practice were evidently very necessary to make him a correct Singer.

While in Dublin, this Gentleman made one of the best blunders recorded. —One evening, during the performance of the *Jubilee*, he was suddenly called to go on the Stage ; but having mislaid a wooden goblet made for the purpose, he, in the hurry, rather than keep the Stage waiting, snatched up a crystal rummer, and sung, amid the loudest bursts of laughter “ *Behold this fair Goblet ! ’twas carv’d from the tree, &c.* ”

A difference arising between Mr. HARRIS and Mrs. KENNEDY, a Lady that generally officiated as a male in the vocal line, Mr. DUFFEY, who had now seen some service in Dublin, was engaged in her stead for Covent Garden, where he made his *debut* the beginning of the Season 1789. He has a good voice, but having a great deal to learn, he was discharged at the conclusion, to make room for INCLEDON.

Mr.

MR. BERNARD.

THIS Gentleman is, perhaps, the only one who adopted the profession of Actor by accident. With his mind full bent on a very different line of life, we find him at an early period, before he could be supposed to follow the dictates of reason, bewitched into the train of *Thespis*, by the charms of a buxom Nymph of the *Buskin*.

He was born in Portsmouth. His father, who was a Gunner, and afterwards a Lieutenant on board a man of war, intended him for the Navy, and procured him admission into the Academy in Dock, where, he was not less diligent in his studies, than delighted with the profession he expected to be engaged in. But his father, who looked towards the dignity of Post Captain, and whose temper was too haughty to ask a favour, and too ambitious to brook neglect, grew disgusted with the Navy, when he found his services go unrewarded: in the height
of

of his indignation, he withdrew his son from that excellent seminary, and placed him as superintendant of his mother's business, who kept two or three shops in Portsmouth and Dock.

The drudgery of a Counting-house, or a Counter, so ill agreed with a mind which had already anticipated many glorious victories over the *French*, that after suffering the ignoble toil for a short time, our young Hero collected a few valuables, and set off, intending to go on board some vessel, either at Plymouth or Bristol. When he arrived at Chard, in Somersetshire, he met with a small Company of Players, and having performed *George Barnwell* at school, he now performed *Lothario* for his amusement. A Member of this Corps invited him to go to Taunton to visit a Company performing there; and our young run-away was so much smitten with the charms of one of the Actresses, that he enlisted in the same service, on purpose to be near her.

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The Taunton Company soon afterwards went to Weymouth, where Mrs. BERNARD discovered her son, though under a fictitious name. She brought him back to Portsmouth, and purchased him a place in the Victualing-Office, which he held for more than a year, until the frenzy for acting, which now fully possessed him, destroyed every consideration but the Stage.

A second time he joined an *Itinerant Corps* in the West of England, and without being addicted to dissipation, a few months obliged him to part with every thing that would raise money, as his Theatrical emoluments seldom exceeded four or five shillings per week. When reduced to distress, he wrote to his mother, who, from time to time, remitted him not only money, but other very agreeable presents; and thus was he rendered more comfortable than his brethren.

A lucrative Benefit—that is, five or six guineas clear profit—enabled him to gratify an old wish of seeing London, where he visited the Theatres se-

veral nights, but was soon obliged, by the want of money, to join a small Company at Epping and Dunmow, in Essex. Here his income was less than ever, and all the principal characters were engaged by the Manager and his family, who had seized every part that was conspicuous, whether it was suited to their age or abilities. Mr. BERNARD'S talents were not, however, passed over in silence; and as he could sing, a neighbouring Manager offered him the enormous terms of *half a guinea* per week, and a clear Benefit, which were greedily accepted.

From this moment he gradually advanced in reputation and profit. The Managers of the Norwich Company hearing a very favourable report of his talents, engaged him at twenty-five shillings per week. He conceived a *penchant* for Miss ROBERTS, the Mrs. SIDDONS of that Company, and married her. He performed principal parts in *Operas* and *Comedies*, and soon became a very great favourite with the town.

From

From Norwich he again went into the West of England, where Mrs. BERNARD's merit made so much noise, that Mr. PALMER, now of the Post-Office, but then Manager of the Bath Theatre, went to Weymouth, and requested that she might perform *Calista*, with which he was so highly pleased, that he made them both very liberal offers; but it was many months before they could be accepted without breaking their agreement with the Weymouth Manager.

In light Comedy Mr. BERNARD soon became a particular favourite with the Bath Audience; and he had the honour of being a principal in instituting the *Musical Society*, at the White Lion, which being the most eminent in the kingdom, we will give a short history of its rise.

Sir JOHN DANVERS, who is fond of observing the different manners of the different classes of mankind, requested Mr. BERNARD to take him to a Club of reputable tradesmen, where nothing above malt liquor was suffered to circulate,

culate, and where the principal entertainment was singing *Catches* and *Glees*. Sir JOHN was so much pleased with the conviviality of the evening, that he regretted the want of a more elegant Society on the same plan. He desired BERNARD to write letters, in his name, to several Noblemen and Gentlemen, proposing the scheme ; to which some of them immediately acceded. Sir JOHN presented the Society with an excellent Organ, and appointed Mr. BERNARD to be Secretary. The number of Members was soon after increased from forty to one hundred. RAUZZINI officiated at the Organ, and the Vocal Performers in the town always officiated in the *Glees*; even the celebrated HARRISON has taken a part in them. A permission to visit the Musical Society became an object of desire, and often difficulty, to the first Noblemen in the place. The strictest order was observed. It met once a week, and it is now the first institution of the kind in this country.

Mr. BERNARD had rendered himself a favourite on the Stage ; respectable
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off it; and his emoluments were very considerable, when Mr. HARRIS engaged him for Covent-Garden, where he made his *debut* as *Archer*, in the *Beaux Stratagem*, in October 1787, and acquitted himself with great credit.

He confined himself to the characters of Fops in light Comedy. *Fribble*, *Jack Meggot*, *Sir Brilliant Fashion*, &c. he represented with success: indeed there is a light neatness in his figure, countenance, and manner, that is happily adapted to parts in Genteel Comedy. Sensible of the great merit of Mr. LEWIS, he was content with performing the characters under him, and that Gentleman could scarce have found a better second.

Mr. BERNARD is Proprietor and Manager of the Plymouth Theatre, where he performs every Summer. The care he takes to provide Actors of merit for that town, and the attention he shews them, have not only made him popular with the inhabitants, but what is more difficult, have made him beloved by those of his own profession.

Last year he was solicited to take the management of a Theatre in the Island of Guernsey. As such an amusement was new in that place, and it wore the appearance of being very lucrative, he accepted the offer; deserted Covent-Garden Theatre, and, we believe, has not been disappointed in his expectations.

Mr.

Mr. HOLMAN.

MR. HOLMAN is descended from Sir JOHN HOLMAN, Baronet, of Warkworth Castle, Banbury—It is a rare occurrence to find a family owe its declension to its attachment to the interests of the prosperous claimants of a throne. Mr. HOLMAN is deprived of a considerable property from a decided part an Ancestor took in promoting the Hanoverian succession in disobedience to his father, who from religion and political inclination, was a warm espouser of the House of STUART ; this disunion of sentiments divided the father from the son, who fell in the battle of Dunblaine, 1715. He left a son, Mr. HOLMAN's Grandfather, who failed in obtaining the property of his family, from the simple want of his father's register, who was christened at a Romish Chapel.

By this it appears that Mr. HOLMAN remains a victim of ill-fated Royalty ;
but

but the talents he possesses will compensate for the want of entailed possessions.

His Grandfather rendered considerable service to Government in the Rebellion of 1745: Mr. HOLMAN's father was also in the army.

Mr. HOLMAN early testified such talents, as made a complete literary education an indispensable duty of his friends to furnish him with. He was therefore placed at an early age at the Soho Academy under the tuition of Dr. BARWIS, and after his death of Doctor BARROW his successor. From that highly-esteemed seminary he proceeded to Queen's College Oxford, where his literary pursuits were rewarded with approbation, and his propriety of conduct with esteem. His Dramatic talents had shewn themselves in the yearly exhibitions of the plays of *Shakespeare* at the Academy of Soho; and so highly were they rated, that great eminence in the *Thespian* art was predicted, should he elect that for his profession; he, however, gave his

his attention to the Church, till friends whose opinions claimed respect, strongly recommended the profession he has adopted, and the talents he possesses for it strongly justify their advice and his decision.—He has, since his Stage life commenced, taken a degree at Oxford—and still passes at the University what time he can spare from professional avocations.

In October 1784, Mr. HOLMAN made his first appearance in the character of *Romeo*—his reception was so flattering, as to induce Mr. HARRIS immediately to engage him for three years, at a handsome salary—during this term he sustained the most arduous characters in the Drama—with that animation and effect, which could scarcely be hoped for, from youth and inexperience.

At the expiration of three years, Mr. HOLMAN quitted Covent-Garden, and performed two winters in Dublin with increasing fame; and here he formed a connexion with Miss HUGHES, a young Lady of great beauty, who
after

after having been the most elevated of the Cyprian damsels in that city, betook herself to the Stage, and made her first appearance in *Lady Townley*. In resentment for an insult offered to this Lady, he had a *fracas* behind the scenes with Mr. DAWSON, which accelerated his departure, accompanied by the fair one, who in Edinburgh went by his name.

After being one season in Scotland, he renewed his engagement in Covent Garden, at an increased salary—where he will doubtless continue.

Mr. HOLMAN by nature and education is endowed with every capability for forming a great Actor, and his faults seem to proceed from too great animation, and an exuberance of fancy.—the variety of new Characters he has performed since his last engagement, is at once a proof of his talents and industry, and his frequent appearance in Comedy has shewn him no less calculated for the service of *Tbalia*, than of *Melpomene*.

Among

Among the great variety of Characters he performs, we select *Hamlet*, *Romeo*, *Richard*, *Hotspur*, *Douglas*, *Edgar*, and *Leon*, as in excellence the most prominent.—But in a long list of other parts, he is so much admired, that it is a common matter of dispute, whether there is a better Actor on the Stage.

This Gentleman has been unfortunate in his female connexion, for he has been lately attacked in a very cruel manner. He was obliged to permit Miss HUGHES to take his name when they went to Edinburgh, for the housekeepers of that city are such strict moralists, that they would not upon any other terms, than as Man and Wife, have allowed them to take lodgings; and since that period the Lady has obstinately refused to lay down her title. Whether from a wish to become “Benedict the married Man,” or from a disgust at Miss HUGHES’s temper or extravagance, he has found it necessary that they should part. He offered to settle one hundred pounds per annum
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upon her, and either to provide for their two children himself, or permit them to remain with their mother. But these terms she has rejected with indignation ; and in hopes of terrifying him into her measures, has advertised that she will publish a Pamphlet containing a narrative of his barbarous treatment towards herself and children. By this step, perhaps, she expects to excite the public resentment against him, and to force him into a compromise ; but as the means are equally desperate and unjustifiable, as if she were to clap a pistol to his head, we hope she will miss her aim.

Mr.

Mr. F. AICKIN,

THIS Gentleman adds to the train of Performers who have been *broke* (to use a theatrical expression for a first appearance) on the Irish Stage. Born in Dublin, and being the son of an eminent Weaver in that metropolis, his father designed him for that business, in which there is little doubt he would have established himself as a capital tradesman, had his endeavours seconded the intentions of his family; but the Stage, which has a variety of charms for a young man who has a *penchant* that way, solicited him so strongly, that after having struggled in vain to attach himself to business, he at last publicly declared his intentions; and at once abandoned the *shuttle* for the *trunccheon*.

His brother's example, Mr. J. AICKIN, who had by this time embraced the Drama, probably acted as a strong inducement. The first part he appeared was in *George Barnwell*, in a country

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town in Ireland, and under the tuition of Mr. P. LEWIS, uncle to the Deputy-Manager of Covent-Garden.— Whatever his applause might have been, we believe it is no difficult matter to compute his profits. The life of an *itinerant* Player generally abounds with so much distress, as make sit only supportable to two kinds of people: those who are under the enthusiasm of the Stage, or those who from their indolence or obscurity can possibly expect no better alternative. Our hero being under the influence of the former, was totally cured of rambling after a few campaigns; when looking forward to the capital as the only place to reap any benefit from his profession, he sheltered himself from the inclemencies of a country Company, under the *urbane* roof of Smock-Alley Theatre.

In this situation he remained some time, when, though not under all his former embarrassments, yet in no proper direction either to cultivate his talents or his fortune. It is a despicable necessity

necessity that the Managers of the Dublin Theatres have long laboured under, that either on account of their poverty, dissipation, or want of attention, they do not pay their Performers very regularly: by these means they are often obliged to look for those who will *give them credit*, rather than to those that will *do them credit*; and hence such Performers occupy all the principal parts, whilst others of greater merit, who have no money to lend, or interest to command, are obliged to support characters as unsuitable to their cast as disgraceful to their Manager.

Whether it was that Mr. AICKIN was piqued at this arrangement or not, we cannot decide; however, he left Ireland about the year 1764, and soon after got an engagement at Drury-Lane Theatre.

Previously to his leaving Ireland, he married a lady of family and fortune of that kingdom; and as there are some circumstances relative to this match that mark in the person of Mr.

AICKIN the natural warmth and openness of the Irish, we shall take the liberty of introducing them in this place.

The Lady and he being of different religions, he found it difficult to prevail on her father; after soliciting for some time, but in vain, he agreed with her to carry her off: and for this purpose the night was fixed. As the hour appointed was to be very late, Mr. AICKIN, with the chosen few who were to sustain his attack, supped at a Tavern in the neighbourhood of his Mistress, when by accident they were joined by an English Gentleman, who being alone, begged permission to sit with them. The bottle circulating quickly after supper, the conversation consequently took a lively turn, in which the stranger bore his part much so much satisfaction to Mr. AICKIN, that starting up in a transport of affection, he shook him by the hand, and after telling him, he looked upon him to be one of the honestest fellows in the world, and his friend,
he

he said he would give him in an instant proof of the latter; then pulling out a case of pistols from his pocket, continued, "Know, my dear boy, I am engaged to run away with a Lady this night, supported by those Gentlemen; now you shall be of the party——here are the *poppers*—come away—we have not a minute to lose."

The other, petrified at this instance of his friendship, for some time did not know what to make of it; till seeing it was merely the effusion of youth and friendship, he told him——"he was much obliged to him for his partiality, and that he would readily attend him, but meeting with an accident in his left leg a few days before, his not being able to run might be the means of discovering the party."—His excuse was sufficient, and after damning the accident that deprived him of so valuable an associate, he sallied out, and in a few hours was as good as his word.

On his arrival in London, having greater opportunities to try the force of his theatrical powers than before,

every year may be said to have improved them; he rose into considerable reputation at Drury-Lane, and about twelve years ago, he went over to Covent-Garden: he soon after set up a Hosier's shop in York street, and was appointed to serve some of the Royal Family in that article. But whether from the death of his wife, or that he again disliked business, he withdrew in a few years from that line, and commenced Manager of the Liverpool Theatre, a station which he still holds.

He has now married a Mrs. Lowe, who was the widow of an eminent merchant in the city, and who has a jointure of eight hundred pounds per annum, during her own life. This, with Mr. AICKIN's theatrical emoluments, enable them to live in affluence; nor is his heart sensible of self-gratification only, for when Mr. GARDINER, late of Covent-Garden Theatre, was on her death-bed, and deprived of his salary for being incapable of his business, Mr. AICKIN generously allowed him
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the amount out of his own private purse.

From a good person, no inconsiderable share of judgment, and a sonorous distinct voice, he has succeeded in the impassioned declamatory parts of Tragedy, insomuch that from his so often being cast in this line, his intimates of the *Green-Room* have christened him "TYRANT AICKIN;" a character in private life no man is more the reverse of, either in temper, or the duties of friendship, than Mr. AICKIN. We do not, however, assert, that all his merit lies in Tragedy, when we have seen him fill with so much pleasure the serious parts in Comedy—such as *Sir John Flowerdale*, in the *School for Fathers*; *Stockwell*, in the *West-Indian*, &c. There is a pleasing harmony in his tones, and a precision of expression that give force to those characters, and even set off the generous sentiments with which they abound.

This Gentleman's son has lately followed the footsteps of his father,
for

for in spite of every injunction to the contrary, he last summer eloped, and performed at Richmond. He is now, we believe, wandering about in some itinerant Company.

Miss

Miss BROADHURST.

THIS young Lady has a sweet melodious voice, and, Mrs. BILLINGTON excepted, is the most pleasing Singer at this Theatre: in many passages she reminds us of COURTENAY, on the Union Pipes, who certainly commands the greatest power, and produces the most bewitching and various sounds on that Instrument which possibly can be conceived. His ingenuity seems to have made a new discovery in Instrumental Music; and to draw any analogy between his enchantment and the abilities of Miss BROADHURST, favourable to the latter, must surely be attributing a considerable degree of success to her exertions.

Miss BROADHURST's father was an Artist; and his talents as a Miniature Painter, though not the most eminently celebrated, were of respectable repute, and procured him a sufficiency to support himself and family in a very genteel

genteel manner. His Daughter's vocal powers had been noticed from her childhood; and almost as soon as she had entered her teens, Mr. PIERCE, a Musical Composer of genius, strongly recommended her to adopt the science of *Apollo* as her profession. His predictions in her favour, together with the obvious necessity of her pursuing some line to obtain a maintenance, decided her parents and herself to follow Mr. PIERCE's advice, and she was articulated as an apprentice to that Gentleman, for a certain number of years.

During her probation Mr. BROADHURST died, and as the effects he left behind him were of no great value, the prospect of the emoluments to be derived from Miss BROADHURST's Musical exertions afforded great consolation to herself and her mother. Mr. PIERCE was not remiss in his duty, he shewed every attention and desire to render her as finished a Singer as possible, and having made great progress, he used his influence in bringing her forward on the Stage, and she made her

her *debut* at Covent-Garden Theatre, in the character of *Polly*, in the *Beggar's Opera*, towards the conclusion of the year 1790.

Fortunately for Miss BROADHURST, Mrs. BILLINGTON was not engaged at that Theatre during the whole of the Season; and as our young Heroine's abilities were above mediocrity, she was of necessity appointed the Leader in every Opera. The power and sweetness of her voice, aided by a tolerable musical education; her unaffected simplicity and interesting manner, and the neatness of her person, together with some share of beauty, procured her at once a large portion of public favour. She made a noise in the Theatrical World for several months, and in a variety of characters which she assumed, she completely established her own, as a Singer of more than common merit. The period of her articles with Mr. PIERCE is now expired, and we believe she lately has renewed others with Mr. HARRIS, for five years at a very handsome salary; and although

though she is not likely to prove a magnet of importance, yet she may be made more than useful in the Musical Corps. Her countenance, like that of Mr. POPE, is rather too short, but still her natural talents will bear much cultivation, and by due attention and perseverance in study, she may attain to greater eminence in her profession than she at present enjoys.

It is with no small degree of pleasure that we find ourselves obliged to conclude the Memoirs of this Lady without entertaining the reader with those anecdotes which abound in those of her sisterhood. Hitherto she has neither been accused, nor suspected of any criminal piece of gallantry. She puts herself entirely under the guidance of her mother, and we hope she will ever observe the same laudable conduct. In this respect, therefore, Miss BROADHURST's Memoirs in the Closet will be found far less curious than her exertions are upon the Stage.

Mr.

Mr. WILSON.

HERE we behold the only Low Comedian of importance in the Metropolis, who is equally successful in exciting risibility in a private company, as on the public Stage. It was remarked of the late Mr. EDWIN, that he could more readily set the Playhouse than the table in a roar; and we believe the same observation holds good respecting the present illustrious gentleman in his line: many persons mistake them when uttering the *good things* of an author, for uttering *good things* of their own, and imagine that they possess as much wit behind as before the curtain; but in this they are greatly deceived: our present subject, however, is an exception, for he is singularly distinguished by his convivial powers; his droll stories, puns, repartees, and general whim are sure to keep the company alive and in good-humour; and not the least recommendation of his face-

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tiousness,

tiousness, is, that he seldom or never mixes it with satire or malignity.

To follow him through the various scenes which he has witnessed, and to repeat the many *bon mots* he has uttered, would make two volumes alone; —the one of vicissitude and adventure, and the other of jests that would rival JOE MILLER's collection. We own ourselves incapable, both from a deficiency of knowledge and a want of space, to do justice to either; but as he recounts them in company with uncommon glee himself, they cannot be altogether unknown to the public, nor shall they at a future period be lost to this work.

Mr. WILSON is a native of DURHAM, and has received no small degree of patronage from Mr. TEMPEST and other gentlemen of that place. His first essays on the Stage were made in the most indigent of the itinerant Companies in Scotland, and in the north of England, at a time of life when his youth might have excused any such folly, for it is considerably upwards of twenty years ago. He bore
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the hardships incident so such a situation with fortitude, for he was resolved to be an Actor ; and he at last obtained an engagement in the Theatre Royal Edinburgh, where his abilities as a Low Comedian rendered him a great favourite, and ensured him a permanent settlement in that corps. He remained there many seasons, until the death of the celebrated SHUTER, whom he resembles in his acting, induced the Managers of Covent-Garden House to bring him to London, for the purpose of supplying the place of that regretted son of the Sock.

His public *entrée* in the Metropolis was undistinguished by uncommon admiration, yet he had reason to be pleased with the kindness of his reception. He, however, was so fortunate as to have the part of *Don Jerome* in the *Duenna* assigned to him soon after his first attempt in this city : as he was the first who represented that entertaining character ; as he represented it in a most characteristic and successful manner ; and as the Piece had an

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astonishing *run*; it completely established him as a Performer of merit in the opinion of the Town; and from that time the principal Comic *Old Men* in all Plays were allotted to him, as being the chief person in that line, and he retained quiet possession of it for several years.

Partly by his own imprudence, but more by the villany of some Attornies, to whom he entrusted the management of his affairs, he became so involved in debt, that lest *John Doe* and *Richard Roe* should insist upon him acting the *Prison Scene*, he made his *exit* from London. A compromise soon after took place, and he returned; but still the infamy of some Gentlemen in the Law baffled all the attempts he made to extricate himself; and as the most remarkable instance of this fact, we will relate the following, which cannot be disputed, as it happened before about a thousand persons, and in itself forms a singular occurrence in Theatrical History.

In the year 1784, Mr. HARRIS, Proprietor of Covent-Garden Theatre, advanced

vanced Mr. WILSON a large sum of money, to pay a part of his debts, and the remainder were to be put in a train of liquidation. Mr. WILSON could not go round to his creditors himself, without being liable to an arrest; he therefore, as is usual upon these occasions, employed an Attorney, and lodged four or five hundred pounds in his hands, to enable him to accomplish the business. This Gentleman did continue to obtain *time* from the creditors, and made Mr. WILSON believe that the business was going on as well as could be wished. Instead, however, of paying the money confided to his care, he, without the knowledge of his client, put in Jew bail to several actions then depending, and gave Mr. WILSON to understand he had paid the debts—but he soon decamped with the whole money in his pocket. The principal of those obliging Israelites now came upon Mr. WILSON, and published hand-bills, which were distributed at the doors of the Theatre, accusing him with running away from his bail. These

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proving ineffectual, the person, whose name was SANGUINETTI, one evening, during the performance of *Gretna Green*, at the Summer Theatre, leaped from the King's Box upon the Stage, and clapping a pistol to Mr. WILSON's breast, conducted him behind the scenes.

The consternation of the audience, and the confusion of the other Performers, may easily be conceived. Moses was kicked from behind the scenes out at the Stage-door; and Mr. WILSON at last came forward, and explained the whole to the House, much to their satisfaction, nor did he ever receive more applause. He stated, that he could not consider himself responsible to the Jew, as he never had solicited him, or even known, till of late, that he had become his bail; and that so far from imagining those actions were bailed, he thought they were entirely discharged, as he had given money for that purpose.

By the agency of this *worthy Lawyer*, whose name was TURNER, it was now put out of Mr. WILSON's power to satisfy his creditors, and he was obliged.

ed to make a second *exit*. He went to Scotland, and immediately became an extraordinary favourite ; but upon Mr. EDWIN's death, he was again recalled to the metropolis, where he has renewed the good opinion of the Town. He has been a man of great gallantry in his time. Miss ADCOCK, the late celebrated Mrs. WILSON, lived with him many years ; but he has now, we suppose, bidden adieu to such amours, for about twelve months ago he married a daughter of Mr. LEE LEWIS, with whom, it is said, he is contented in the matrimonial state.

No Actor possesses more rich broad humour than Mr. WILSON ; his portrait of an ignorant, rich, obstinate, guzzling Citizen is equal to any thing on the Stage, and is finely exemplified in *Alderman Gobble*, in *The Lord Mayor's Day*, or *Sir John Bull*, in *Fontainebleau*.— In ludicrous *Old Men*, none at present can be compared to him, if we except PARSONS and QUICK.

Mrs.

Mrs. HARLOWE.

HERE we behold a Lady, who despising the common partialities of her sex, for youth, vigour and beauty, seeks the comforts of a matrimonial life—without the ceremonies—in the arms of age and infirmity. Whether it is the Platonic or the *Plutonic* system that induces her to rivet her affections on Mr. WALDRON of Drury-Lane Theatre, is a point which we cannot ascertain ; or whether it is the gratification she feels in wearing the *Breeches* at home, with as much *eclat* as she does on the Stage, yet so it is, that this Lady in her amours chooses to be singular.

Mrs. HARLOWE, who assumes this *novelist* name, because she thought it would read agreeably in a Play-bill, had seen a good deal of service in many hard campaigns before she was enrolled in a Summer Corps, of which Mr. WALDRON was the Commander, and whose scene of action lay in the vicinity

nity of the Metropolis. She did not confine herself to the assault and capture of the good opinion of her audience; but well knowing that success is frequently obtained by stratagem, she laid a mine for the purpose of ensnaring the affections of her General, and carried her point so compleatly, that when the Troops were disbanded, previous to the new arrangements for Winter quarters, Mr. WALDRON took her into his own *private service*, and in the ensuing Spring he procured her an engagement at Sadler's Wells.

For such a Theatre, her abilities were excellently calculated: being a tolerable Singer and Actress; gifted with a neat person in the dress of either sex; and possessed of a good flow of spirits and some humour, she at once became a constellation at that place of amusement. In recitative Pieces, in Pantomimes, and in all the motley mixture of Entertainments, she gave the greatest satisfaction, and both as an Actress and as a Singer, she acquired
such

such a degree of reputation as induced the Managers of Covent Garden House to article her among the Members of their Company,

She made her *debut* at that Theatre Royal about two years ago ; and she acted wisely in not attempting the first walk, which she must soon have found herself incapable of supporting. The second and third-rate parts she has entirely aimed at ; and as she is a neat figure in Breeches, has much vivacity, can sing a little, and has a considerable knowledge of the Stage business, she has met with approbation from the Public. In pert Chambermaids, and characters of that complexion, she is entitled to praise, and fully merits the rank she holds in the Theatre.

ACTORS AND ACTRESSES
OF THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

Mrs. E. K E M B L E.

THE Drama, though generally allowed to be eminently useful, as instrumental to the interests of virtue, has in all ages, since its institution, had so much prejudice to encounter, that nothing can more evince its importance than the success which has attended it, notwithstanding the difficulties through which it has been destined to struggle. The followers of this interesting sphere of amusement and source of morality have, it must be confessed, seldom been distinguished for the purity of their manners and the rectitude of their conduct; and though, in the Theatrical profession, as well as in most provinces of life, many respectable members have undoubtedly been found, yet the general odium on the character of an Actor, which is regularly transmitted from age to age, has not abated, and mankind have never been disposed to form a

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proper estimation of such worth, but have considered them as a species of beings calculated only to promote the purposes of transitory diversion, "to fret their hour upon the Stage," but never to have the privilege of being admitted to domestic intercourse and friendly endearment. Such, however, has been the progress of philosophy and the arts, that society begins to be characterised for more liberal sentiments; and, in this country at least, an Actor who possesses solid claims to distinction in his art, and whose private life is marked by such moral qualities as deserve esteem, is not, by the mere circumstance of his calling, excluded from that protection and regard which the members of every other profession, in which genius is required, have always been able to obtain. But, perhaps, the general influence of more refined maxims than were wont to prevail in former periods, has diffused itself over the votaries of the Sock and Buskin; and, by improving their principles, and amending their

their lives, has gradually subdued those unfavourable prejudices which, in the earlier states of the Drama, were but too well founded. It is certain that, whatever the condition of the Stage may be, in other countries, there have been of late years many Theatrical Characters among us who have been as much distinguished by private merit as by their public talents; and who, no less esteemed for the one than admired for the other, have enjoyed the protection and friendship of persons of the highest rank.

The lady who is at present the subject of our notice, while she has raised a very considerable share of Theatrical fame, has uniformly supported such a character in private life, as no malice has been base enough to slander with the least exceptionable imputation.

Mrs. ELIZABETH KEMBLE was born in London, and is the daughter of Mr. SATCHELL, of Great Pulteney-street, Golden-square, Musical-instrument Maker to the PRINCE of WALES. She had from early life indulged a

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strong

strong propensity to the Stage, but knowing that such pursuits were highly disagreeable to her family, she was obliged to conceal her inclinations, though she was incapable of suppressing them; and, therefore, whatever studies she might think necessary to prepare her for her favourite profession, she was obliged to prosecute in secrecy, and had very seldom an opportunity of promoting her improvements by the examples which Theatrical exhibitions held forth to her.

After devoting as much leisure as she could steal from the observation of her relations to the attentive study of the profession which she secretly determined to assume, she made application to Mr. BAKER, a Musician connected with Covent-Garden Theatre; with whom, when her family perceived that it was impossible to subdue her tendency to a Theatrical life, she was permitted to enter into articles for a due qualification in such musical characters as her vocal powers and the general cast of her talents properly suited.

suites. Mr. BAKER discovered such qualities in his fair pupil as promised to raise her to a considerable rank, and therefore he soon introduced her to Mr. HARRIS, the Manager of that Theatre, whose taste and judgment could not be blind to the very conspicuous merits of Miss SATCHELL, and who immediately offered an engagement, which her friends permitted her to accept, and she made her first appearance in the Character of *Polly* in the *Beggar's Opera*, in 1780, which she performed with so much simplicity, tenderness, and unaffected delicacy, that though the Opera, admirable as it is, was rendered by frequent exhibition flat and uninviting, she seemed to renew its popularity and attraction, and was generally deemed the best *Polly* that had appeared since the original representative.

Excellent as Miss SATCHELL was in this character, it was soon found that her powers demanded something of an higher order, and she therefore assumed *Opbelia*, *Desdemona*, *Juliet*, and other

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parts

parts of a similar kind, with the most interesting success. But the Character which principally established her reputation with the Public, and which procured her the warmest support of criticism, as well as excited the celebrations of Poetry, was *Adelaide*, in the *Count of Narbonne*, a Tragedy of Mr. JEPHERSON'S; in which her performance was so exquisitely pathetic, that it is but justice to attribute the success of the Piece chiefly to her exertions. Here, however, it would be improper to pass over Mrs. POPE, (then Miss YOUNGE) who not only displayed great force of Tragic Merit in the *Countess*, but by her tender assiduity to encourage the talents of Miss SATCHELL, fully proved that her private virtues are upon a level with her public abilities. It is not necessary to enumerate the several characters which Miss SATCHELL afterwards assumed; it is sufficient to say, that, in the gentler province of Tragedy, where refined and interesting expression was required, her influence over the affections was as power-

powerful as her delineation of nature was vivid and beautiful. After she had been about three years on Covent-Garden Theatre, with merited distinction, Mr. STEPHEN KEMBLE, a brother of Mrs. SIDDONS, was engaged at that House; and in a short time so strong an attachment arose between him and Miss SATCHELL, that with the concurrence of their mutual relations, a marriage very speedily took place. Unfortunately for the admirers of the Drama in London, Mr. KEMBLE's discharge occasioned his wife's separation from Covent-Garden Theatre at the close of that season.

In 1783, after taking leave of the metropolis, Mr. and Mrs. KEMBLE performed at Liverpool, Edinburgh, and other respectable places in these kingdoms, where she constantly became the reigning favourite, and was always distinguished by the eulogiums of the Muse. The place, however, in which this charming actress has made the strongest impression since she quitted London, and in which she seemed chiefly

ly disposed to display her talents, is Exeter, where she has been received with a warmth of admiration that no Actress was ever able to obtain before her time, and where her residence was rendered the more desirable, as the inhabitants treated her with the most flattering marks of private esteem.

Pleasant, however, as her situation at Exeter must have been, it was impossible that talents so valuable and conspicuous should be suffered to remain thus remote from London; and therefore Mr. COLMAN, whose knowledge in Theatrical matters was the result of great abilities, extensive literature, and long experience, made overtures to Mr. and Mrs. KEMBLE for an engagement at the Haymarket Theatre, which they accepted, upon terms adequate to their talents and reputation. The return of our amiable heroine to London was a proper compliment from the Manager to the wishes of the Public; though, at the same time, it certainly indicated a suitable regard to the credit of his Theatre,
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and consequently the interest of his property. She first appeared in the Summer of 1786, in the character of *Opbelia*; her performance of which shewed that, though her judgment was expanded, her sensibility had not abated in delicacy, softness, and expression. Since that period she has assumed various characters of sprightly Comedy and rustic simplicity, which might have been deemed incompatible with her talents and habitudes, but in which her success was founded upon chaste humour, truth, and nature.

But the part in which this excellent Actress has fully established her claims to the highest degree of Theatrical distinction is *Yarico*, a character which is pourtrayed with such an expression of artless and native softness, as will ever render that charming Opera a favourite with every lover of pathetic simplicity. If Mrs. KEMBLE had never appeared in any other character than *Yarico*, the Public must have allowed her the tribute of its warmest approbation; and, indeed, to the credit of
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the taste and feeling of the times, her representation of it has been universally, and in the most fervent manner, sanctioned by public admiration.

Mr.

Mr. EDWIN.

HERE we behold an instance of the absurdity of hereditary employments and honours. It has ever been a maxim with philosophers to ridicule the custom of placing a great man's son to succeed him in an arduous situation, merely because he *is* his son ; and however the advocates in favour of a reverence for antiquity, established law and usage, order and subordination, may vindicate hereditary succession, as tending to prevent the anarchy and confusion arising from the collision of factions, yet we find the Stage a pure democracy, where merit alone is placed at the head of affairs ; and that it would be as prejudicial to the Treasury of the Theatre if Mr. EDWIN were put in possession of all his Father's characters, as we find the obstinacy, the tyranny, or incapacity of Kings frequently have been to the treasuries of kingdoms which they were

were destined to govern, because their fathers, perhaps, were men of great abilities.

To the Memoirs of the late celebrated EDWIN, whose loss *Thalia* will long regret, we must refer for the family of this young gentleman. Born the son of so favourite an Actor, the Stage naturally became an early object of his ambition ; and this predilection does not seem to have been discouraged by his father, as we find him on the boards at the Summer Theatre in 1778, performing the part of *Hengist* in the Tragedy of *Bonduca*, when he could not be more than nine or ten years old. This juvenile essay gained him great applause, and he fully merited it ; for in acting and speaking he surpassed what could have been expected from a child of his age.

In Covent Garden, as well as in the Haymarket Theatre, he for many years represented such characters as were suited to his youth ; until a few years ago, having sprung up almost to manhood, he, both in the town and in the

the country, assumed the more regular walks of the Drama ; and although his success was not great, yet he did not altogether fail in his attempts.

He has long been the inseparable companion of Lord BARRYMORE, whose Private Theatricals at Wargrave he assisted greatly by his abilities, and with whom he generally passed much of the winter season. About a year or two ago he became enamoured of Miss RICHARDS, a promising young Actress, who performed a few nights at Covent-Garden Theatre, and they were married ; but matrimony was not so sweet to them as courtship, and frequent quarrels produced a separation. We cannot say which party was most to blame. Mrs. EDWIN, junior, is, we believe, now engaged in a country company.

Our young Hero has, for some seasons past, been engaged at the Summer Theatre, where he has not been able to gain much reputation in his father's line ; indeed his person, which is handsome, and his general appearance

rance and manner, seem to be better calculated for the Gentlemen or genteel Fops than any other class of characters.

Mr.

Mr. STEPHEN KEMBLE

IS one of the great family of KEMBLE, whose elevation has been occasioned by Mrs. SIDDONS; we must therefore refer the reader to that Lady's Memoirs for the genealogy of our present subject, who is her youngest Brother.

It being contrary to the wishes of Mr. R. KEMBLE, that any of his children should come upon the Stage, STEPHEN was put apprentice to an Apothecary, whose name was CHEVAUSE, in Coventry or Worcester, where he remained several years a disciple of Galen. The example of his brother and sisters, who were by this time upon the Stage, he did not view with indifference or disapprobation, but rather with envy; and he long considered it a cruelty that a genius like his should be cramped over a pestle and mortar by the proud ideas of his father.

From the fear of losing the friendship of his relations he suppressed his

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ardour, until he was obliged to decamp for his visits to the *till*, which he sometimes called on for a recommendation to the apple-stall, or the ginger-bread baker. Ashamed of what is too often done by boys who are entrusted in a shop, and what in fact was but a trifle, he retreated without any signal, and enlisted in a strolling Company; a situation which he embraced with pleasure.

A strong voice, a dignified rant, and a tumid action, obtained him the name of a good Tragedian in the country; and from this report he was engaged for Dublin, where he performed with some applause, and where his brother JOHN then was. Mrs. SIDDONS had at this time just commenced her glorious career in London, and Mr. HARRIS, hearing that the Managers of Drury-Lane intended to engage her brother, who possessed great abilities, dispatched a messenger in haste to forestall them; but this Mercury, who was instructed to bring over the *great Kemble*, mistaking the bodily for the mental
supe-

superiority, engaged Mr. STEPHEN KEMBLE, who; from corpulence, was certainly the biggest man.

His first appearance at Covent-Garden was as *Othello*, in 1783. Never was the heroic Moor so literally murdered. Many exclamations excited laughter; and so fond was he of Miss SATCHELL, the gentle *Desdemona*, that in embracing her he *would* have a kiss; the collision left one side of her face quite black, much to the entertainment of the audience. He afterwards performed *Bajazet*, *Richmond*, &c. but with so little approbation, that though Mr HARRIS was obliged to lose a charming Actress, Miss SATCHELL, who had married him, he was discharged at the conclusion of the season, and his wife went with him.

Since that time he has followed the fortunes of that Lady, and was last winter Manager in Edinburgh. He performed at the Haymarket in the Summer, where he was merely useful in sentimental *Old Men*. His corpulence and nasal utterance render him

disagreeable ; but the merit of his wife procures him the indulgence of the Public.

He did not attend to his engagement at the Haymarket last Summer, as he was wholly occupied in attempting to continue in the management of the Edinburgh Theatre ; but at present his success is uncertain.

Mrs.

Mrs. WHITFIELD.

THIS lady is wife to Mr. WHITFIELD, of Drury-Lane Theatre, and has followed his fortunes for many years past : to recount her memoirs, therefore, would be to repeat a great part of his. She was engaged with him several seasons at Covent - Garden House, and sustained a very respectable line of business ; but when he left his situation there, she of course accompanied him, and she has not yet been able to reinstate herself in either of the Winter Houses.

For several seasons last past she has performed at the Summer Theatre, where she is found very useful in second or third-rate parts of genteel Comedy. She also occasionally steps into the Tragic walk. Her powers, though far from being great, render her of considerable value in any company, for she seldom offends, and frequently

quently pleases: her countenance is, however, better suited for the haughty dame than the affable woman of fashion.

Mr.

Mr. M O S S.

THIS Gentleman is a native of Ireland, and was born in Capel street, Dublin. At an early period he was sent over by his friends to England, and was there engaged in an active profession. A strong inclination for the Stage, which, no doubt, he imbibed from visiting the London Theatres, prevailed over his engagements in business; for, like an unthinking youth, he precipitately relinquished his occupation, and joined a Company of Performers at Enfield in Essex.

His success at his first outset was by no means proportioned to his ardour: prejudiced against him on account of his youth and inexperience, the Manager would not permit him to perform, notwithstanding his repeated solicitations. He dreaded returning to his friends, whom he had offended by his elopement; and no resource being left but that of perseverance, he

he travelled further into the country, and there joined an *itinerant* troop. Since that time he has invariably devoted his labours to the service of the *Comic Muse*.

Mr. Moss is, we believe, known, and has distinguished himself as a Comedian in most of the Companies in Britain and Ireland. In Edinburgh he is one of the most favourite Performers; nor is he less esteemed as a man than in his professional character as an Actor.

Mr. MACKLIN, a few years ago, recommended him to the Dublin Stage, where we believe he now is, and where his talents pleased so much in his inimitable performance of the *Miser*, that the Managers were induced to repeat that Play thirteen nights successively! He also performed with no less success in Corke and other parts of Ireland.

Such was now the celebrity of his professional abilities, that the Managers of Drury Lane would have brought him forward as a substitute for Mr.

PARSONS,

PARSONS, had he not deemed the terms inadequate, and therefore declined the engagement. The approbation which he met with the following season at the Haymarket Theatre induced the Managers of Drury Lane to treat, and he was actually engaged for that situation; but under the management of Mr. KEMBLE he was so much kept back from the Public, on account of some reasons unknown to us, that he was compelled, with becoming spirit, to solicit his discharge, which, by the interference of a friend, was, with some difficulty, obtained in the spring of 1789.

He then returned to Edinburgh, where he was received with no small satisfaction by his friends and the Public. In the summer season he continued not only a very useful, but a favourite Performer at the Haymarket, until he was superseded by Mr. WILSON.

He has confined his study entirely to Comedy; and though deserving of commendation in most of the characters

ters he attempts, yet he certainly appears to most advantage in the parts of *Old Men*, which evidently appear to be his *forte*. — His figure, voice, and manner, present us exactly with the idea of age ; and we cannot help exclaiming,

“ This is not he whom fiction drew ;
“ For Nature owns the likeness true.”

In the example of Mr. Moss is seen the effects of an early inclination for the Stage, supported by perseverance, and improved by attention and experience.

Mrs.

Mrs. TAYLOR.

THE Haymarket Theatre has been remarkable for bringing forward Performers of merit. HENDERSON, EDWIN, QUICK, Miss FARREN, &c. &c. made their *debut* at it; and the happy selection from Country Companies may entirely be attributed to the discrimination of those eminent Dramatic Writers, FOOTE and COLMAN, whose judgment were not less acute in perceiving the talents of the Actor, than in perceiving the talents of the Author; but whether merit is now more scarce, or from Mr. COLMAN's imbecility, there has not been, for several Seasons, a Performer brought forward at this House who has the least claim to public approbation, since the introduction, of Mrs. BROOKS, if we except the Lady before us.

Mrs. TAYLOR's Mother, whose name is VALENTINE, keeps a Music-shop at

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present in Leicester. Miss VALENTINE being possessed of a good voice, it is therefore no wonder that it was early cultivated. Her tutors, however, were not very eminent, and her accomplishments in the science extended no farther than qualifying her for a country Theatre; a situation which she embraced with pleasure, as it long had been the object of her most ardent desire.

She had scarcely experienced the inconveniences of an itinerant Company, before she was addressed by Mr. TAYLOR, a Gentleman who had been bred an Attorney, but whose Stage-struck mind forced him to change his pens for truncheons—ink for blood, and commence Actor. He made honourable proposals, and being rather agreeable in the Lady's eyes, after a short courtship they were married.

She had obtained a tolerable reputation in the Provincial Theatres, not only as a Singer, but as an Actress, when she came to London on a visit to a friend, and was introduced to Mr. TIGHE, a Gentleman of distinction in Ireland, who interested himself so much
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in her behalf, as to obtain her an engagement at the Haymarket, 1789.

Her first appearance there was on the first night of an After-piece, called *Half an Hour after Supper*, in which she personated a young, amorous, giddy girl, with such vivacity as procured her a favourable, and indeed flattering reception. She afterwards performed *Madge*, in *Love in a Village*, and other characters, with equal success; but as her vocal powers were not sufficiently refined for a London audience, she was considered rather as an Actress than as a Singer. On an emergency she read Mrs. GOODALL's part in the *Battle of Hexham*, much to the satisfaction of the Public, and impressed the Manager with a very favourable opinion of her talents.

She was last Winter engaged at a genteel salary in Edinburgh, where her abilities rendered her a very great favourite; and as she possesses the natural requisites for an Actress, we doubt not that she will make advances in the public estimation at the Haymarket Theatre.

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Mr.

Mr. WILLIAMSON.

MR. WILLIAMSON's father was formerly a very reputable Sadler in London, and gave the subject of these pages, whose real name is WILLIAMS, a genteel education. A misfortune that befel our hero's brother, brought such disgrace upon the family, that the old man went to India, in hopes of obliterating it from his memory ; and his wife, with a daughter, retired to Berwick.

Young WILLIAMSON, unwilling to burthen his mother, who could scarcely support herself, and finding he was thrown upon the world, betook to the Stage, a profession he had long been fond of, and now endeavoured to convert to a means of obtaining a subsistence.

Among the itinerant corps he was received as an excellent Actor. The love-tales he told on the Stage, had a *real* effect on the heart of a young Lady,

Lady, of a good family and connections, who, desirous of realizing the scenes in *Othello*, like another *Desdemona* eloped from her friends, being previously assured of the honour and affection of Mr. WILLIAMSON, who married her. Beside an agreeable person she brought with her some valuable articles ; and her husband has received, at different times, upwards of three thousand pounds of her fortune since their union.

The honey-moon of this young couple was not so short as has been imagined. They lived together mutually happy, the consequence of which was two or three fine children. His name as an Actor in the country being now raised into some estimation, he was engaged for Edinburgh, where Mrs. BULKELEY conceiving a passion for him, estranged his affections from his wife, and persuaded him to send her to live with some relations in London.

Mr. BANKS, who had hitherto been Mrs. BULKELEY's gallant, could not submit passively to this change. He

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challenged Mr. WILLIAMSON, and even struck him in the Dressing-room ; but without effecting any alteration in the Lady's mind, who it seems was highly pleased with her new admirer.

Mr. WILLIAMSON went to Liverpool in the Summer of 1782, at the same time that Mrs. BULKELEY first appeared at the Haymarket ; and so strong was the passion of that Lady, that she sent several sums of money to him ; and miserable when out of his society, she exerted every nerve to have him engaged at the same Theatre in London, and at last she accomplished it.

Mrs. SIDDONS having just astonished the town, the report of her brother JOHN KEMBLE's *Hamlet* had excited great curiosity to see it ; and Mr. WILLIAMSON, perhaps wishing to anticipate him in that character, chose it for his *debut* at the Haymarket Theatre, in 1783 ; but his success was so different from his wishes, that he has ever since been obliged to content himself with some of the third-rate characters.

With Mrs. BULKELEY, now Mrs.
BARRESFORD,

BARRESFORD, he lived a considerable time. He is always engaged for the Haymarket in the Summer, and in the Winter he performs in Edinburgh ; while his wife is left to console herself in the best manner possible with her relations in England.

As an Actor he has no merit. In those *walking Gentlemen* who must be considered as necessary to carry on the plot of the Play, he generally appears. There is an awkward imitation of the Gentleman about him, that makes his attempts at the conspicuous characters ridiculous.

This Gentleman has lately been appointed Deputy-Manager of the Edinburgh Theatre, by Mrs. ESTEN ; and since he has been named to this new Office, he has assumed an uncommon degree of importance. There was not a Performer in the Haymarket Theatre last Summer, whom he did not consider beneath him, as a Manager ; and he assured Mrs. WHITFIELD, that she never should be engaged by him, because she called him by his real name of WILLIAMS !

Mr.

MR. BARRET.

ALTHOUGH we cannot devote any part of this work to the Memoirs of this little Sage, yet he possesses a sufficient quantity of merit to claim a small record. He has been engaged in the Haymarket Theatre many years, and for a long time the most important duty confided to his charge was the delivery of a message; but he was so fortunate as to be cast for the part of *Orator Mum* in O'KEEFFE's Farce of *The Son in Law*, which he personated with such natural simplicity as to gain particular distinction, and to induce the Managers to put him forward in some trifling characters of *Old Men*, &c. which he now represents with much satisfaction to the Public. His appearance, voice, and manner, are peculiar to himself, and excellently calculated to heighten the Comic scene; and we are surprised that

that he never yet has been enlisted in either of the winter corps, where for the *Apothecary* in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the *Starved Friar* in the *Duenna*, he is singularly formed to succeed.

Mrs.

Mrs. I L I F F E

LOVE and gratitude are so nearly allied, that we often see the one produced by the other. Valuable presents generally please the fair sex, as much as encomiums on their beauty or understanding: gratitude is the result of that pleasure; esteem follows gratitude; and love follows esteem. Such are the progressive steps commonly pursued in obtaining female affection; and the same rule holds good with men; for Mr. ILIFFE is an instance that a husband may frequently be gained by that indisputable proof of regard, a readiness of conferring pecuniary favours.

This Lady is the daughter of Mrs. PALMER, who many years officiated as House-keeper to the celebrated Mrs. CRAWFORD. That eminent Actress shewed great partiality for our Heroine, and, while a child, she brought her forward as *Prince Arthur*, in *King John*,

John, and other such little characters, at Drury-Lane.

As Miss PALMER increased in years, Mrs. CRAWFORD, (then Mrs. BARRY), took great delight in instructing her in different parts of education ; she engaged a Music-master, and other Tutors, and in every respect treated her as her own child, nor did she intend her for the Stage, as being too dangerous an ordeal for the virtue of a young girl. But her mind being bent on the Drama, she eloped from her patroness, and commenced Actress, in a Country Company in the West of England.

However her passion for spouting might be gratified, she found a disagreeable change in the want of the luxuries, and even the necessaries of life, but her Theatrical enthusiasm made her forget every difficulty. She was at Richmond during the first Summer of Mr. ILIFFE's essay, where she had, by amazing œconomy, amassed the enormous sum of ten pounds! Mr. ILIFFE, who
went

went by the name of WILLIAMES, had long been secretly sighed for by our Heroine, who shewed him every civility; but he returned her kindnesses merely by civility. He quarrelled with the Manager, and after having vowed never more to perform in his Company, he found himself without a guinea to carry him to another. Miss PALMER was not ignorant of his embarrassment, and addressing him in some confusion, she solicited forgiveness for the liberty she was going to take; expressed her knowledge of his determination to leave Richmond, and of his want of money; and after some further apology, pressed him to accept the ten pound note she had so long been saving.

This act of generosity affected Mr. ILIFFE extremely; he professed the utmost gratitude, and was anxious to know how he should repay the obligation. The behaviour of the Lady sufficiently betrayed her fondness; and as he anticipated great happiness from this proof of her affection, and her character

rafter was untainted by calumny, he offered her his hand, which, it is supposed, was very readily accepted.

From Brighton they both went to Sheffield, where they were married, Mr. PERO, the Manager, giving the Lady away. They performed a few nights in Sheffield, and then went to Edinburgh, where Mrs. ILIFFE was very successful in Vocal Characters; a circumstance that reflects no great honour on the musical taste of the audience.

In the following Summer she was engaged in Vauxhall, London, a place for which her manner and strength of lungs were very well adapted. She was generally approved by those who listen to the singing there; but she soon discovered that it was not a situation in which she was likely to acquire any professional reputation. She obtained an establishment at the Haymarket in 1789, where she personated a variety of musical parts, but without *eclat*; nor would she have been put so forward, had

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there

there been Singers of any celebrity at that Theatre. Her person is thick and short ; her countenance and demeanor vulgar ; and to vocal refinement or delicacy she is an utter stranger ;—she has, however, a strong clear voice, and an useful degree of confidence on the Stage.

She has been disengaged from the Haymarket Theatre during the two last Summers, and lately has displayed her vocal powers at the Temple of Apollo, in St. George's Fields—a sphere for which they are perfectly adapted.

Mr.

Mr. I L I F F E.

NOTWITHSTANDING every theatrical hero reports himself to have been a Gentleman, previously to his *debut* on the Stage, there are very few who were really entitled to that honourable appellation by their rank in Society. But the disciples of Thespis are eager to appear as great in their private, as their public capacity ; and nothing is more mortifying than any thing that reminds them of their former indigence, or plebeian occupations ; a pride that richly merits derision.

Mr. ILIFFE may justly boast of more respectability of private character than the bulk of his cotemporaries. His father is a Clergyman, and, we believe, Curate of St. Clement's Danes. Our hero had a genteel education ; and, contrary to the wishes of his friends, he indulged his own inclination in going to sea as Midshipman, while a boy. At the conclusion of last war,

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he was, with many others, left to devise a new line of life ; and his father procured him a comfortable place in the India House.

With many leisure hours upon his hands, he now entered into the alluring dissipations of the town. His visits to the Theatres became very frequent ; and gradually soured at the mechanical sameness of his employment as a Clerk, he conceived a strong *penchant* for the Stage ; a situation in which he thought he could better gratify his love of pleasure and adventure, as well as render himself a conspicuous public character,

Without signifying his design to his relations, he therefore set off to Richmond, in 1785, and the better to conceal his retreat, he assumed the name of WILLIAMES. His success was not very flattering ; it was such as the majority of Stage-struck youths experience. He was however retained, as one who promised well.

Towards the conclusion of the season, he quarrelled with the Manager,
and

and from being offered the assistance of money in his distress, by Miss PALMER, a Singer in the same Company, who was in love with him, he was so pleased with her generosity, that he went with her to Sheffield, where they were married. From thence they went to Edinburgh, where his wife was a favourite, and where he performed several characters with some applause : he resumed his own name in Scotland.

In the Summer, his wife being engaged at Vauxhall, he accompanied her to London ; procured recommendations to Mr. COLMAN, who was pleased to speak favourably of his talents ; and he made his *debut* at the Haymarket, as *Young Norval*, in the Tragedy of *Douglas*, 1788. In this character his personal appearance, his animation and confidence, obtained him considerable applause ; but a want of dignity in his deportment, and too much flippancy of speech, shewed his want of study, and his incapability of supporting a conspicuous walk in Tragedy.

gedy. He was, however, engaged, and has been very serviceable in the *walking Gentlemen*. But he has now quitted that, for the Provincial Theatres.

Mr.

Mr. PALMER, jun.

IF we were to calculate the progressive improvement of this young Gentleman by the great improvements his Father has made since his *entrée* we might predict highly in his favour. Mr. JOHN PALMER, sen. when he first came on the Stage, was looked upon as one of the most contemptible of all Actors ; but now the scene is reversed, and he is looked upon as one of the most eminent. His son, our present subject, although he did not at once astonish the Town by the splendour of his abilities, has nevertheless shewn the green powers which may be ripened into excellence by proper cultivation.

It does not appear that Mr. PALMER, jun. was designed for the Stage ; for we have reason to think, he would have been initiated in another profession had not the embarrassed state of his Father's pecuniary concerns baffled his best intentions in favour of his
son,

son, who being a chip of the old block, was happy to avail himself of any excuse for adopting a line of life, which held out the prospect of at once enabling him to gratify his passions. Accordingly he made his *debut* at the Haymarket, in the Summer of 1791, and performed the *Prince of Wales*, in *Henry IVth*—a Character in Mrs. Inchbald's new Comedy of "*Next Door Neighbours*," and several other parts, in which his genteel youthful appearance, and his modest manner, together with the circumstance of his being the son of so great a favourite, interested the audience in his behalf, and induced them to give him such encouragement, as occasionally brought forth some signs of latent ability. He obtained an engagement in the Theatre, and if he could assume a little more confidence and energy, he might soon arrive beyond mediocrity in the sentimental walk. But we fear that the hereditary dissipation, which he seems to enjoy largely from
his

his father, will divert his attention from the study of the profession he has embraced. His amours are already somewhat curious, and may perhaps, at a future period, be noticed in this work.

Mrs.

Mrs. BROOKS.

TO attain excellence in Dramatic exhibition requires natural abilities, both for conceiving the various characters, and for communicating the conceptions forcibly and impressively to the spectators, and art to improve and regulate the talents bestowed by Nature. Mrs. BROOKS, on her first appearance, gave striking proofs of her genius for Theatrical representation. — Such, since, have been the effects of taste, judgment, and increasing experience, directing genius, and fostered by merited praise, that she may be assured of speedily arriving at the summit of professional eminence.

This Lady is the daughter of a Gentleman of the name of WATSON, in the county of Forfar, in North Britain, who, by his adherence to the STUART family, in the year 1745, forfeited his property. He afterwards married, and settled in London in the mercantile line.

line. About the year 1763, he went on business to Jamaica, where he died; leaving a widow with six children, of whom Mrs. BROOKS is one of the youngest.

Her mother gave her an education in a capital Boarding-school, and sent her to France to complete her in genteel accomplishments. On her return she became tutoress in a Nobleman's family, and soon after, at the age of eighteen, married Mr. BROOKS, who was at that time an eminent Paper-hanging Manufacturer. By misfortunes in business he became a bankrupt; and she, from the most laudable of all motives, that of lending *her* assistance towards the support of their family, turned her thoughts to the Stage.

She first appeared under the auspices of Mr. COLMAN, at the Haymarket Theatre, in July 1786, the character was *Lady Townley*, in which, though confessedly one of the most difficult in the Drama, she met with more applause than her most sanguine wishes could hope for. In consequence of this
reception

she performed it four times that season to crowded audiences, and succeeded in an engagement at that Theatre.

At the close of the season, she received an invitation from Mr. DALY to perform in Dublin, which she accepted; and met with success far beyond her expectations. She was honoured with the patronage of some of the first characters in the kingdom, who bestowed the most flattering compliments on her Theatrical talents.

The following Winter, at the end of the Haymarket season, she went to Edinburgh and Glasgow, where she performed with universal approbation. She personated the part of *Yarico* with great applause, on the first introduction of that Piece on the Edinburgh Stage. She likewise appeared in the opposite characters of *Lady Townley* and *Cowslip*, and was much admired in both. Her success in parts so different is a proof that her talents are sufficiently diversified, the very numerous assemblage of Ladies at her Benefit at Edinburgh, and the reception she met with

with in the first families there bear an honourable testimony to her private character, as well as Theatrical merit.

To the talents of Mrs. Brooks is added virtuous conduct: she is an affectionate wife and a tender mother, and is an excellent member of the great Theatre of Society, and as such cordially received by genteel and worthy people.

“Gratior est pulchro veniens in corpore virtus.”

Beauty renders other perfections more irresistible. Of that fascinating quality none can possess more than our Heroine. Her features are regular, adorned with delicacy of complexion. Her countenance exhibits both animation and bewitching softness, which no regularity of features can give: from the mind only can they proceed. She is tall, and elegantly formed. Her deportment is easy and graceful. Her voice was at first rather weak, but custom has now rendered it sufficiently sonorous. In her manners there is much politeness and vivacity.

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The great and variegated excellencies of this Lady as an Actress, particularly in representing *Women of Fashion*, will, we doubt not, induce one of the Managers of the Winter Theatres to offer her an advantageous engagement, and thereby make a considerable addition to the strength of the Corps.

Miss FONTENELLE.

ALTHOUGH we may suppose Performers capable of representing characters contrary to their own feelings, yet, if their real dispositions were fully known, it would generally be found, that the proud Tragedian is equally dignified in private; that he who successfully portrays an insidious hypocrite, is himself a hypocrite; and that the Lady who mimics the woman of fashion on the Stage, mimics her equally at home. There are exceptions to this rule, although they are few; and the most remarkable one that has come within our knowledge, is the Lady now before us.

That part of her life, anterior to her *entrée* on the Stage, was passed in the same manner as that of almost every Citizen's female child. Her mother has resided in the heart of London for many years, perfectly secluded from the amusements and gaiety of the

West-end of the town ; and Miss FONTENELLE went through a Boarding-school education, and was instructed in all those qualifications requisite to form a good tradesman's wife, before she had the smallest thoughts of the Drama.

The particular circumstance that first induced her to enter into theatrical life, we are unacquainted with, but it probably was the suggestions of those who observed her great flow of spirits, and agreeable vivacity. The profession of Actress was so distant from her mind, that previously to her *debut*, we were well assured, she never was present at the performance of more than twenty pieces.

Mr. W. WOODFALL, a respectable Conductor of a Morning Newspaper, was the Gentleman who introduced her to the Covent-Garden Manager. To his judgment of Performers, as well as Pieces, great deference has always been shewn ; and although friendship might, in the present instance, make him represent Miss FONTENELLE in the
most

most favourable point of view, yet her success during the first season fully justified the opinion, that if she improved, as it is supposed every young Actress will, she would now have nearly rivalled Mrs. JORDAN.

Her *entrée* was at Covent-Garden Theatre, in the character of *Maggy*, in O'KEEFFE's Opera of the *Highland Reel*, and as she came forward on the first night of that piece, she prevented the disagreeable, though invariable custom, of comparing a young Candidate's claims with those of a veteran in the same part; her talents dazzled at first, but they gradually fell in estimation.

There perhaps never was a young Lady who came before the Public with more confidence: whether this proceeded from supposed excellence, or insensibility to the difficult undertaking, we cannot determine; but we are inclined to think it was the latter, as her short acquaintance with the Stage could not possibly make known to her the danger of attempting

Too much liveliness, and too many gestures, which were not always properly adapted, constituted her principal merit ; it was an exuberance so rarely witnessed in a novice, that the town indulged it, thinking that time and observation would correct it ; and that to check an Actress for too great a portion of spirits, would be injudicious, since many are nightly seen who have no spirit at all.

Miss FONTENELLE, however, shewed no signs of reformation : she jumped about the Stage, clapped her hands, shook her head, squalled, and stared, without the least regard to character or situation ; and although she pleased a few, yet the town grew tired of her, and set her down as the most impudent, nay, even indecent girl, that had ever been seen on the boards :—yet no one bears a better name, or more justly deserves it, in private.

She had been engaged at Covent-Garden for three years, at forty shillings per week ; conditionally, that if, at the end of the first season, either
party

party thought proper to destroy the articles, it might be done. She was discharged at the conclusion of that period, and went to Edinburgh, where the same opinion of her forwardness and incoherence accompanied her ; yet even there her private character was respected.

She was a few seasons ago engaged at the Haymarket, as we suppose, instead of Miss GEORGE:—but there is a lamentable falling-off.—Miss FONTENELLE is scarcely noticed ; and the other was an uncommon favourite.

Mrs.

Mrs. WHITLOCK,

HAS sprung from a root which has produced some of our best Theatrical Performers; and it will seem rather surprising that the sister of Mrs. SIDDONS and of Mr. JOHN KEMBLE should want the abilities requisite for a tolerable Actress. But genius is no more universal in a family than it is hereditary; for while the one daughter of Mr. ROGER KEMBLE is adored by the Public, the other passes without the slightest notice of approbation.

Miss ELIZABETH KEMBLE, now Mrs. WHITLOCK, has already been mentioned in the first volume of this work, where it is stated that she is sister to Mrs. SIDDONS, and was apprenticed to a mantua-maker in Leominster, as her father, the Manager of an itinerant Company of Comedians, was anxious that none of his children should ever come upon the Stage—a very laudable wish in all parents; but a wish, in the present

present instance, which if it had been conformed to, must have kept his family in obscurity and indigence, compared with its present eminence, and must have deprived the Drama of some of its brightest ornaments.

The example of her sisters and brothers seduced Mrs. WHITLOCK, notwithstanding the prescriptions of her father, to join the Thespian train; and she had performed several years in Provincial Theatres, though with little *eclat*, when the great success of Mrs. SIDDONS in London, in 1783, induced the Proprietors of Drury-Lane to engage our Heroine, in hopes that there would be more than common ability in every branch of a family which had produced such a phænomenon. But they soon discovered their mistake;—or, rather, the Public discovered it for them. Miss E. KEMBLE attempted many second and third-rate parts in Tragedy, but she was very indifferently received, and sometimes her exertions were even pointedly disapproved of. She did not continue more than one or
two

two seasons at Drury-Lane, when Mr. WHITLOCK, Manager of the Company at Newcastle upon Tyne, married her, and with him she went to be the leading Actress of his corps. She has now been in that situation several years, and would not have been introduced here, had not her sister-in-law, Mrs. STEPHEN KEMBLE, been prevented from attending her engagement at the summer Theatre last season so early as was requisite, when Mrs. WHITLOCK was brought to town for the purpose of being her substitute. She performed *Queen Margaret* in the *Battle of Hexham*, *Julia* in the *Surrender of Calais*, &c. but without giving great satisfaction: Her person, voice, and countenance, which are strongly marked with the family likeness of the house of KEMBLE, are, however, too coarse and masculine; and on such a little Stage, to behold such an Amazonian whining the tender tales of a love-sick girl, frequently gave a burlesque and laughable appearance to that which was designed to be wonderful pathetic and sublime.

Mrs.

Mrs. WHITLOCK probably had hopes that, like her sister Mrs. SIDDONS, her second attempt in the Metropolis might prove extremely brilliant; but we are of opinion, that although she possesses sufficient abilities to make some figure in the country, she never will be able to gather laurels in the capital.

APPENDIX.

The island is a small, rocky, and barren
island, situated in the middle of the
ocean, and is the only one of its kind
in the world. It is a small, rocky, and
barren island, situated in the middle of
the ocean, and is the only one of its
kind in the world. It is a small, rocky,
and barren island, situated in the middle
of the ocean, and is the only one of its
kind in the world.

APPENDIX.

Mr. EDWIN.

OF all the variety of portraits which we have the honour of presenting to the Public, few will be found to possess features more striking and *outré* than those of the late celebrated representative of *Lingo*. In some of the situations of that modern *Buffo* we find qualities by no means consistent with the ease, good-humour, and apparent sagacity he brought with him to the Theatre; and while we learn how little a man's natural disposition is to be deduced from his public performances, we also see how much easier it is to *act* than to *speak* from yourself; and that to retail the wit of others with success, it is by no means necessary to possess any of your own.

As this celebrated Comedian is now gone to that bourne from whence no traveller returns, we shall be less rigid in exposing his foibles, than if he had still been existing to read his misdeeds; leaving him to answer for his conduct at that awful tribunal, from whence there is no appeal.

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His Father was an Organist in London, and instructed him in music, a circumstance that proved of great advantage to him in his profession as a player. But whatever occupation he might have been designed for, his passion for the Stage, rose superior to every other consideration: he frequented Spouting Clubs, where he always recited Tragedy, and gradually became so fond of acting, that he eloped to Manchester, where he made his *debut* on the public boards.

He soon afterwards went to Dublin, and was engaged as one of the lowest underlings there; his round of parts being mostly such as *Catesby*, in *Richard III.* *Bernardo* in *Hamlet*, &c. for he had not yet forsaken the Buskin. Chance however threw him into *Sir Harry Sycamore*, which he represented so happily, as to draw forth the applause of the audience, and inspire him with a predilection for that line of acting. But the deranged state of the Dublin Theatre, obliged him to leave it and depend upon the success of an itinerant Company for sustenance, rather than the *name* of a salary in a Theatre-Royal.

He wandered about the country a few years, until accidentally passing through Bath, he obtained an engagement there. In that spot his talents first were cherished, and called forth; and he soon became a great favourite in Fops, and Low Comedy.

About

About that time, (upwards of twenty years ago) he first met with Mrs. WALMSLEY, who was then a Mantua-maker in Bath, respected by her neighbours, and in possession of a good business. Early in their acquaintance he prevailed on her to sell all her property, amounting to some hundred pounds, which he received, and to live with him as his wife, in which situation and character she bore him several children.

Towards the conclusion of FOOTE'S management at the Haymarket, EDWIN was engaged at that Theatre, where he at first performed very trifling characters, until Mr. COLMAN acquired the command of the Summer troops, who having a plan in agitation of purchasing the Bath and Bristol Theatres to perform in during the Winter, and the Haymarket during the Summer, was anxious to render his Country Actors favourites in London, as he intended to keep a regular Company and to engage no performers from Drury-Lane or Covent-Garden. The Bath and Bristol Theatres could not be obtained; but the attempt occasioned EDWIN to be put forward in his profession, and he displayed abilities worthy encouragement.

His success in *Tipple* in the *Flitch of Beacon*, &c. in the Summer of 1778, rendered him a desirable object to Mr. HARRIS, who offered him terms to come to Covent-Garden, which EDWIN, thinking inadequate to his deserts, refused. To force him to compliance, Mr. PAL-

MER, the Bath Manager, who is the particular friend of Mr. H. declined engaging him; and EDWIN, rather than submit to the dictates of the Mimic Governors, joined an itinerant Company in the neighbourhood of London, where he received uncommon emoluments, and from whence Mr. HARRIS soon after thought proper to receive him on his own terms.

He had just acquired the reputation of an agreeable Low Comedian, when the Muse of Mr. O'KEEFFE came forward to lift him into the warmest sunshine of public applause. The writings of that Gentleman, and the acting of EDWIN, were peculiarly adapted for each other, and neither of them could have acquired so much celebrity without the mutual exertions of both. *The Son in Law*, *The Young Quaker*, *The Agreeable Surprise*, and *Peeping Tom*, successively raised the fame of the Author and the Actor; and it is generally admitted, that the wit of the one, and the humour of the other, are so far stretched beyond probability, that although we are forced to laugh in the moment, yet the least reflection makes us angry with ourselves for being entertained with such nonsense.

The most favourite Low Comedian, particularly with the Galleries, he indisputably was for many years; and we are sorry that we cannot bestow those encomiums on him as a *man*, which he has so often received as a *Player*. Without taste or humour in conversation, he
was

was attached to company ; and without honour or affection, he was fond of the society of women. He has been so much intoxicated by Bacchanalian potions, as to be unable to perform before the audience, and apologies have been made for him. To complete his character, which for the credit of the Drama we reluctantly develope, he in the Spring of 1789 deserted Mrs. WALMSLEY,

As that transaction is one of the most conspicuous in Mr. EDWIN's life, we think that a candid narrative of it will explain his character better than volumes of criticism. With Mrs. WALMSLEY, who relinquished all her views in life for him, he had lived with every appearance of matrimony for nearly twenty years ; she was introduced, and understood every where to be his lawful wife, and had borne him several children, the eldest of whom, Mr. EDWIN, Jun. has performed at the Haymarket, Brighton, &c.

Mr. EDWIN, however, thinking himself intitled to every indulgence which a lucrative salary could procure, and unrestrained by any sense of honour or duty to his family, formed an intimacy with a notorious dishonest woman of the town, who destitute of affection, left him when he would not gratify her avarice so fully as she desired. To force her to return, he threatened to charge her with stealing his watch, a practice not uncommon with that lady ; and after

this amiable couple were a little reconciled, he thought proper to bring her home to his own house. This step was greatly resented by Mrs. EDWIN, who in every *honourable* point of view was his wife; and in return he forced her and her eldest son, who espoused his mother's cause, out of doors, advertised them in the news-papers, as not being his *legal* wife and son, and even deprived them of the means of obtaining a livelihood, by insisting that they should be discharged from every Theatre where he performed.

To comment upon this transaction is unnecessary; every person of the least sense of honour or gratitude must execrate it.

But he did not long survive this last act. His intemperance was followed by an indisposition, which occasioned his privation from the Haymarket Theatre in the middle of last Season; and he died in Bedford-Street, on the 31st of October, 1791, in the 42d year of his age, and was buried in Covent Garden Church-yard.

Mr. EDWIN certainly had great merit as an Actor, though he used too much buffoonery. He could not, however, adapt his abilities so happily to Characters, as Authors have adapted Characters to his abilities; hence the few parts of repute he sustained in old Plays, his principal merit being confined to *Clowns*, which he frequently portrayed with fine natural simplicity.

He

He was likewise an excellent Burletta Singer. Though some Actors supported a more various cast of characters, yet none more frequently appeared before the Public. Of the other qualities which he was supposed to possess, we cannot allow his pretensions. Neither wit nor humour had any place in his conversation; nor did he ever, that we learn, prove, by the most trivial production, that he was capable of an idea, but what was suggested by the works of others; which does not give us a little surprize at the title of a late publication, viz. "*Edwin's Pills to purge Melancholy.*"----The only ingredients we know of to purge sorrow, are good-humour and wit; the former of which he never was remarkable for exercising at home; nor was the latter ever known to escape him abroad.

His loss has proved of the most serious detriment to the Managers, who were perfectly sensible how much he was a favourite, particularly with the Galleries: they generally expressed great joy at his appearance, and waited only for his signal of making a *face* to burst into fits of laughter; and, however his propensity to *mimic* may have disgusted, yet his comic powers were superior to all his coteremporaries, and probably will never be equalled by his successors; we must therefore lament that his conduct in private life not only cut him off in the zenith of his reputation, but has left his character as a man greatly reproachable.

Mr.

Mr. R Y D E R.

THERE are dispositions so ill adapted to the dullness of the Law, or the methodical sameness of conducting the business of a Mechanic, that we need not wonder at their flying to the Stage as a sphere fraught with variety, which if not a certain road to Fortune, is at least an agreeable pursuit for those of a volatile unsettled turn of mind.

Mr. DARBY, whose father was a Printer in Nottinghamshire, where he was born, and bred to the same profession, was so much of this opinion, that he early gave up his principal attention to the Typographical Art for the more adventurous science of acting. In several parts of England, particularly at York, he displayed his abilities with success; but sensible of the dishonour attending the profession he had embraced, he changed his name to RYDER, judging that a better *travelling* name, and unlikely to bring disgrace on his family.

He had not been very long in the Itinerant Corps in England, before his fame eclipsed that of his brethren. The Dublin Managers heard such favourable reports of his merit that they engaged him, and he made his first appearance in Ireland in the character of *Captain Plume,*

Plume, in the *Recruiting Officer*, on December 7, 1757.

His practice in England enabled him to personate this part with ease and effect, which, with his natural vivacity, impressed the audience in his behalf, and induced them to predict, that he would prove a charming Actor. His fame not being absolutely brilliant at first, he added to his emoluments from the Theatre the emoluments of his primitive profession as a Printer, a business which he carried on some time after his *debut* in Dublin.

The versatility of his genius, and the happiness with which he executed almost every part he undertook, soon placed him among the most eminent Actors in Ireland. *Captain Macheath*, *Richard the Third*, *Archer*, the *Drunken Colonel*, or *Hob*, he depicted with equal success, and received the most flattering encomiums.

But the views of Mr. RYDER were directed to something more than a subordinate situation, and he manœuvred so well, that he was appointed Manager of Smock-Alley. About this time too Mr. LEWIS, his powerful rival, came to England, and left him without a competitor. He became in Dublin what GARRICK was in London ---- the adoration of all Theatrical Amateurs. The Irish would acknowledge no Actor to possess more ability in any walk of the Drama.

Fortune

Fortune was so propitious to his first managerial efforts, that in a few years he obtained Crow-Street Theatre, the most spacious and elegant in Dublin; and at the same time had the Smock-Alley and Capel-Street houses under his dominion; as for Fishamble-Street, it was so much out of repair, that no rival was to be dreaded there; and thus did Mr. RYDER, for a long time, monopolize the whole Drama in Dublin.

But he acted with less prudence in his prosperity than in his adversity, Mrs. RYDER as well as himself indulged in the most extravagant expences. They kept a chariot, foot men, and a splendid equipage;---they kept two country houses, and two town houses;---one of the latter Mr. RYDER built, at the expence of four thousand pounds, which sold, when his affairs afterwards were settled, for only six hundred, merely owing to its obscure situation; this got it the name of "*Ryder's Folly.*" Many stories are told of Mrs. RYDER's sway with her husband; and it is well known, that she made him vow continence when he went into company, and solemnly declare his adherence to that vow when he returned.

Such being the negligence and profligacy of the Manager, he soon found himself involved in many pecuniary difficulties. He was indebted to Dr. WILSON, the Proprietor of Smock-Alley Theatre, about twelve or fifteen hundred pounds,

pounds, for four or five years rent; and as it had been shut up during that time, it was much out of repair. Mr. DALY secretly applied to the Doctor about ten years ago, for the liberty of performing Plays there; and on the latter representing to RYDER, that he could not suffer his property to go to ruin, and offering to exonerate him from the money then due, he prevailed on to give up the possession of Smock-Alley Theatre, never dreaming that it was to be put into the hands of a rival Manager.

Mr. DALY had secretly engaged many excellent Performers, and whenever he found himself in possession of the Theatre, he assembled them, and opened with all possible expedition. Their talents claimed applause, their novelty attraction; and, what was still more inspiring, their salaries were regularly paid,---which was rather a new thing at that time in Dublin. Many Plays were got up with the greatest magnificence, and particularly *The Belles Stratagem*, which was represented in Smock-Alley with more splendour and *clat* than ever it was in London.

RYDER, thus taken by surprise, began to make every exertion when it was too late. His Company was inferior to his rival's;---his finances were deranged; and his creditors, alarmed at such a formidable opponent as DALY, became very pressing. He took Mr. CRAWFORD, who had lately married the celebrated Mrs. BARRY,

BARRY, into the joint management with him in hopes of adding pecuniary as well as professional strength to his Corps; but in this he was disappointed; and after struggling a few years, he was obliged to give all his property into the hands of his creditors.

About this time he went to Edinburgh, where his merit recommended him to the highest esteem with the public; and he returned to Dublin, where he soon after performed as a *sub* in that Theatre, where he had long been Sovereign. His salary, however, was very great, nor were his talents diminished in the opinion of his old friends.

Seeing no prospect of restoration to his former supremacy in Dublin, and judging that his abilities would create greater profit, and greater admiration, from their novelty in London, he made overtures to Mr. HARRIS, and was engaged for Covent-Garden, where he made his *entrée* in the beginning of the season 1786-87. His salary was large, but his powers had lost that vivid brilliancy which in his early and more vigorous years gave so much delight in Ireland. He attempted, when upwards of fifty, to acquire equal reputation in England, to that which twenty years before he had so justly merited in the sister kingdom; but his exertions were not received with the warmth, or attracted the crowds his friends had predicted. He was universally acknowledged to be an Actor of great judgment

ment, accomplishments, and experience; but he wanted that richness---that luxuriance of genius, which is the gift of Nature, and never displayed to such advantage as when the spirits and the constitution are in their meridian.

Falstaff, Trappanti, Iago, The Drunken Colonel, &c. &c. he personated here with great success; for though his name did not attract numbers, nor his performances give exquisite delight, yet he is much above mediocrity; and is justly entitled to an eminent place in the public estimation. His person is neat, but the features of his face rather resemble those of a porter than a gentleman; his deportment is uncommonly easy and appropriate; his talents respectable in any line of acting; and upon the whole he may be considered as a valuable member of any Theatre.

He brought two of his daughters out at his Benefit the latter end of the season 1790, one in *Estiphani*, in *Rule a Wife and have a Wife*; and the other in *Leonora*, in the *Padlock*. They displayed very promising talents, and have since been cordially received in Dublin.

Mr. RYDER disagreed with Mr. HARRIS, in the summer of 1791; and though we cannot precisely say for what reason, yet we suppose disappointment had soured him. His daughters and himself performed at the Haymarket Theatre in the summer and they afterwards went to Edingburgh, where their success was very

flattering. From there Mr. RYDER visited Ireland and about a year ago, he died in very embarrassed circumstances, leaving a large family behind him totally unprovided for.

Mrs.

Mrs. BANNISTER.

THROUGHOUT the whole list of the Children of Thespis, we do not meet one whose theatrical life is entitled to more praise than that of this Lady. She has enjoyed the height of public approbation, and still enjoys the height of private esteem. After being sixteen years a favourite Performer, she has retired in the prime of life to enjoy with the greater serenity, the domestic felicity, which her family amply affords, and with the agreeable reflection that in the sunshine of prosperity, she secured the means of rendering the winter of life comfortable.

The mother of this lady, Mrs. HARPUR, is is now a Mantua-maker in Bath, and is related to Mr. RUNDELL, the Silversmith on Ludgate-Hill, who was formerly in Partnership with Alderman PICKETT. The brother of Mr. RUNDELL has, we believe, made an ample fortune by managing the Theatre in Calcutta. But as Mrs. HARPUR displeased her family by marriage, they disowned her, and she was obliged to educate her daughter to her own business, the only fortune she could bestow.

While Miss HARPUR was in this situation there happened to lodge in the house a musician engaged to perform in the Concerts at Bath.

He

He was struck with her voice as she warbled uncultivated notes, while employed with her needle; and as it is agreeable to be the patron of a pretty girl, he represented the excellence of her vocal powers, the emoluments they would infallibly procure, and immediately began to instruct her. She sung in public, and was approved, yet while her master was instilling the science of music he imbibed the poison of love, but on disclosing his passion he received no encouragement.

At this time Mr. PAUL, a Gentleman of Musical taste, was so charmed with the powers of Miss HARPUR, that desirous of transplanting them into a more rich and genial soil, he obtained her an engagement at the Haymarket Theatre, where after the necessary preparations, she made her *debut* in *Rosetta*, about sixteen years ago.

The gentleness of her manner, the simple modesty of her deportment, and her delicate execution, together with the sweetness of her voice, procured her not only the encomiums of the play-going people, but of the musical world in general. She was in the Winter engaged for Covent-Garden, and had a very large sum for singing at the Pantheon. Being of a temper rather sedate than gay, and little addicted to company or expence, from the profits of her profession, and with a prize of one or two thousand pounds, which she had the good fortune
to

to gain in the Lottery, she in a few years realized a genteel and independant fortune.

Her beauty, reputation, salary, and fortune, to which may be added, an unblemished character in private life, attracted a number of admirers; but her election fell on Mr. BANNISTER, her present husband.

She had attained such a perfect knowledge of music, that Dr. ARNOLD has often declared he could instruct her no further. But though she was mistress of what may be termed the mechanical part of the science, sung most correctly, and could play any air with the greatest facility, yet she never discovered great ingenuity in her cadences, or displayed any of those beautiful *exuberances of fancy*, which so much astonish and enrapture in Mrs. BILLINGTON. Her manner was rather cold, and wanted a certain tincture of the *Italian* school, at that time coming into vogue.

Miss BROWN, the unfortunate Mrs. CARGILL, who was drowned near the rocks of Scilly in her return from the East Indies, having deserted the London Stage, left Mrs. BANNISTER univalled in her profession; an enunence which she maintained many years until Mrs. BILLINGTON came from Ireland, to astonish and charm the whole musical world, and who, though not reconciled to the ears of the vulgar, quite overturned the old school, and was the occasion of Mrs. BANNISTER being discharged
at

at the end of the season, to make room for this new vocal enchantress.

Mrs. BANNISTER, however, retained the situation at the Haymarket, which she had filled from her first appearance there; but as her talents were upon the wane, her former celebrity a good deal forgotten, and her husband had a handsome fortune, independent of the Theatre, she with great prudence announced her last appearance for her Benefit Night on the 5th of September 1792; when she spoke the following farewell Address, amidst the applause of a crowded House, and was afterwards handed off the Stage by her Husband.

PAINFUL the task for me, which must ensue! }
 My heart is grateful, yet 'tis aching too,
 While I step forth to bid you all adieu! }
 Full sixteen Summers now have roll'd away,
 Since on these Boards I made my first Essay.
 Here first your favour I aspired to court—
 Met my fond wish—and kept it—YOUR SUPPORT!
 Trembling I came—by partial favour cheer'd—
 My doubts dispers'd, and I no longer fear'd.
 Approv'd by you I thought my trials past—
 But my severest trial comes at last!

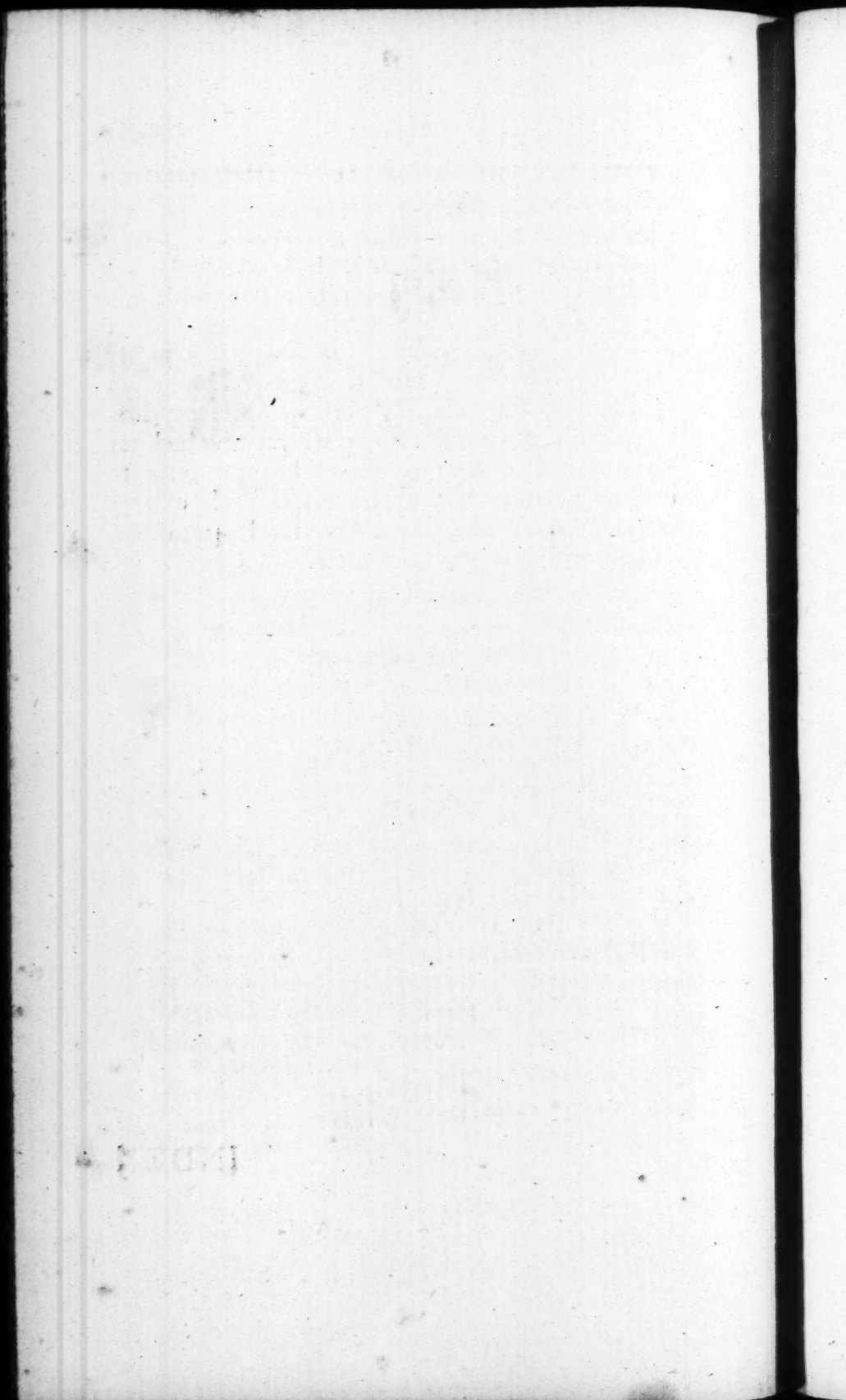
Farewell, my best Protectors, Patrons, Friends!
 To-night my labour in your service ends.
 And Oh! if faintly now the Voice reveals
 Those struggling movements which the bosom
 feels,

Let the big drops, that glisten in my Eyes,
 Express that scene the faltering Tongue denies.

As

As oft retired, unruffled, and serene,
I ponder o'er the past and busy scene—
So oft shall memory pay the tribute due,
Warm from the heart, to gratitude and you.

This Lady is one among the few whose moral rectitude does honour to the Stage. During an intercourse with the Theatre of sixteen years, the breath of scandal has never yet touched her name. Her conduct endears her not only to her own family, but to the whole circle of her acquaintance; she possesses much prudence, virtue, and domestic happiness.



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